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EDITORIAL

REAGAN NUKES LOCAL POWER

President Reagan, who speaks of local autonomy as if it were one of the Ten Commandments, is suddenly pushing big government. In 1984, he pledged that Federal authority would not be imposed on state and local governments' emergency evacuation plans for areas around nuclear power plants. Now he has issued an executive order giving just such power to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the old "duck and cover" Civil Defense Agency.

The trouble with local autonomy, it turns out, is that people won't behave the way the nuclear establishment wants them to. They used their political clout to shut down the Shoreham plant on Long Island, New York, and the Seabrook plant in New Hampshire, insisting that evacuating large numbers of people—themselves—in the event of a major accident is impossible. Anyone who has ever driven the Long Island Expressway knows this makes perfect sense.

But we are talking money here, not safety. Those co-conspirators, the nuclear industry and the Department of Energy, are hellbent to recharge the nuclear power business for the 1990s. So are President-elect George Bush and his newly appointed chief of staff, John Sununu, who zealously promoted Seabrook while Governor of New Hampshire. Three Mile Island and Chernobyl may be remembered at the local level, but in Washington they are just wispy mishaps.

The pro-nuclear cause was further advanced by a second, equally ominous, executive order signed by the President: It permits the Federal government to take over a nuclear plant in case of a national security "emergency." Nobody in or out of government seems altogether clear on just how broadly "national security" will be construed. Chances are, though, that it will at least include meetings of Mothers Against Nuclear Power in the church basement.

THE PALESTINE NATIONAL COUNCIL
Edward W. Said

PEARL HARBOR
Charles Shirō Inouye

VOICES RIGHT & LEFT
Jon Wiener

CAMELOT AND DALLAS
Jefferson Morley

'ANIMAL LIBERATORS'
Harriet Ritvo

ISRAEL'S HARD LINE

AMERICAN JEWS BREAK RANKS

EDWARD TIVNAN

After decades of playing rubber stamp to Israeli policy, no matter how foolish or suicidal, American Jews have finally begun speaking their minds—and in public. Distressed by Israel's harsh measures against the Palestinian *intifada*, frustrated by Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's intransigence and now confronted with the victory of the nationalist and religious right in the recent election, the American Jewish community is becoming more vocal in its criticism of Israel.

This new candor comes at a critical juncture. On November 15 in Algiers, the Palestine National Council declared an independent state, embarking on a serious peace initiative that the Bush Administration cannot ignore. Inevitably, the United States and Israel will collide over such issues as Jewish settlements in the occupied territories and returning land for peace. The strong pro-Israel lobby in Washington will certainly continue all efforts at damage control, but the ground rules of the debate, and the participants in it, clearly are changing.

"The spell has been broken," says Arthur Hertzberg, a professor at Dartmouth College, a former president of the American Jewish Congress (A.J.C.) and an American Zionist persistently critical of the policies of Shamir's Likud Party. Until recently, public dissent from Israeli policy was branded as treason to the Jewish state, ammunition for its enemies. But in the past year, a small group of American Jewish leaders and intellectuals with strong ties to Israel's Labor Party and the Peace

(*Continued on Page 649*)

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LETTERS.

OF APPARATCHIKS AND BRAHMINS

Trenton, N.J.

In his editorial "The Campaign of Do-Nothing Candidates" [Nov. 7], Andrew Kopkind writes that Dukakis "disbanded whatever grass-roots organizations he had during the primaries and gave his campaign over to lazy and unimaginative (and retrograde) local Democratic apparatchiks." My observation, exceedingly parochial and terribly limited, is the opposite. The local and, I was told, state Democratic apparatchiks were excluded from Dukakis's counsel in all its stages from summer into autumn. When, in mild despair late in the campaign, I asked a former county chairman whether and how one could convey to the candidate's managers disappointment at the omission of the long list of substantive topics for which the Republican Administration could be criticized, the answer was that there was no way. Veteran politicians from this part of the country had tried to convey their experience to the inner circle of campaign conductors. It was *these* apparatchiks who refused to heed counsel and insulated the candidate from those having long familiarity with what works in their bailiwicks. Perhaps it is the decidedly non-local *nomenklatura* to whom the campaign was given over who should have been the target of Kopkind's criticism. *Jonathan Gell*

KOPKIND REPLIES

New York City

The Dukakis-Bentsen campaign raised more money than it could legally use for official campaign activities (as did Bush-Quayle). As a consequence, untold millions were delivered to Democratic state organizations for "party-building" projects. In Ohio, for instance, the local party had more than 100 paid staff members working on the election by the end of October, while the Dukakis-Bentsen committee had fewer than five.

In many states, the local Democratic organization, rich with "soft money," simply became the Dukakis-Bentsen campaign after the Democratic convention in July. In some cases, the local pols had been Dukakis supporters in the primary season, and the transition was more or less smooth. In others (especially in the South), the locals had supported Al Gore or some other candidate and they were not terribly enthusiastic about Dukakis. In very few cases were Jesse Jackson's organizers or constituency activists integrated into the Dukakis campaign. Nor were the centrist, mostly white local officials terribly anxious to encourage the development of a grass-roots base that would threaten their political status. That's why not much money was spent on voter registration or on constituency-group mobilization.

In California, the state with the most electoral votes, the Dukakis campaign had constructed an impressive grass-roots organization for the primary. But according to Tony Podesta, the campaign manager (quoted by Robert L. Turner in *The Boston Globe*), "They yanked the phones out on the day after the [primary] election" and dismantled the operation in early June. It was already mid-October when *Philadelphia Inquirer* reporter Larry Eichel reported that "the Democrats are trying to fashion a statewide grass-roots organization out of thin air, and to do it overnight."

Jonathan Gell may well have had a different experience, but in too many cases the Dukakis campaign simply didn't develop an effective grass-roots operation until it was too late. *Andrew Kopkind*

ONE SMALL STEP . . .

Boca Raton, Fla.

In Stephen F. Cohen's timely call for an end to the cold war ["The Next President's Historic Opportunity," Oct. 10] he refers to Mikhail Gorbachev's insistence on "reasonable sufficiency" as a guideline for Soviet defense spending, replacing the goal of superiority and even parity. For both superpowers, this principle is certainly more consistent with their mutual agreement that a nuclear war is unthinkable. It strikes at the most bizarre aspects of the arms race, the feverish drive to pile up arsenals already capable of wiping us all out many times over, and the massive expenditure of resources for arms that it is widely agreed will never be used.

In his September 17, 1987, *New York Times* column Tom Wicker cited Col. Serge Cherney, Chief of Soviet Policy Studies at the U.S. Air War College, as stating that the U.S.S.R. "may now be entering in a new and striking phase—minimal or sufficient defense." Colonel Cherney described this as the reduction of nuclear force to a level that offered no threat to the United States but was sufficient to deter attack from abroad. He suggested that such an approach could yield strategic nuclear reductions far greater than the 50 percent targeted. A *Times* dispatch for November 11, 1987, by Moscow correspondent Philip Taubman reported that Gorbachev saw "a world of drastically reduced nuclear arsenals" under this principle. He defined it as maintenance of "an adequate defense but not investing endlessly in new offensive weapons or feeling compelled to match the West rocket-for-rocket."

In his address last November commemorating the seventieth anniversary of the Russian Revolution, Gorbachev revealed that he had placed the principle on the table. He said starkly: "The Warsaw Pact states have addressed NATO and all European countries with a proposal on reducing armed forces and armaments to a level of reasonable sufficiency." This would appear to apply to conventional as well as nuclear armaments.

In this country, some peace movement leaders are giving voice to the principle. In her address to the SANE/Freeze merger convention in November 1987, Randall Forsberg, director of the Institute for Defense and Disarmament Studies, called on the organization to "advocate . . . minimum deterrence." Paralleling Gorbachev, she specified that this meant structuring U.S. military forces in a purely defensive mold, eliminating offensive capability. She included conventional forces in her definition.

Retired Rear Adm. Gene LaRoque, who heads the Center for Defense Information, in an article in the July *Harper's*, described in some detail U.S. nuclear and conventional military forces worldwide, and analyzed requirements for adequate deterrence and defense. He concluded that a force of thirty-six missile submarines carrying 3,200 warheads, with twenty at sea at all times, could destroy every Soviet military installation in a retaliatory strike, hence providing all the deterrence we would need. The submarines at sea would be secure against an enemy first strike.

LaRoque also calculated that a military force of 1.2 million combat and support troops could defend the country against any conventional attack. As regards our allies, he argued that drastic world changes since earlier postwar years have positioned them to look to their own defenses against conventional attack. The savings in all this would plainly be considerable and our security enhanced, according to LaRoque's estimates.

Logically, the principle can be adopted unilaterally since it embraces the retention of adequate deterrence and defense. But it is hard to imagine military and political leaders in either camp accepting it without indication that the other is interested in moving in that direction. The Soviet leadership has so indicated. And to date, at least some peace movement spokespeople have embraced the principle. A popular drive for it could emerge as the specific way to campaign for an end to the cold war. *Max Gordon*

AUTHOR'S QUERY

For a *catalogue raisonné* of work by Stuart Davis (1892–1964) to be published in the fall of 1990 by Yale University Press, I would like to hear from owners of paintings, watercolors and drawings with whom I have not been in contact. The catalogue will be published simultaneously with the Stuart Davis retrospective exhibition to be held at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1990. Please contact William C. Agee, editor, Stuart Davis *catalogue raisonné* c/o Salander-O'Reilly Galleries Inc., 22 E. 80th Street, New York, NY 10021.

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Manuscripts: The magazine cannot be responsible for the return of unsolicited manuscripts unless accompanied by addressed, stamped envelopes.

Publisher, Arthur L. Carter

President and Associate Publisher, David Parker; *General Manager*, Neil Black; *Advertising Director*, Chris Calhoun; *Business Manager*, Ann B. Epstein; *Bookkeepers*, Tanveer Mall, Ivor A. Richardson; *Art/Production Manager*, Jane Sharples; *Circulation Director*, Margaret Pyle; *Subscription Manager*, Cookee V. Klein; *Publicity Director*, Sarah Perl; *InterNation Manager*, Phillip Frazer; *Director, Nation Books*, Elsa Dixler; *Assistant Advertising Manager*, Eamonn Fitzgerald; *Receptionist*, Greta Loell; *Mail Clerk*, John Holtz; *Administrative Secretary*, Shirley Sulat; *Production*, Terry Miller; *Typography*, Randall Cherry, Sandy McCroskey; *Nation Associates Director*, Sandra Zickefoose; *Syndication*, Jeff Sorensen; *Newsstand Sales Manager*, Jay Pearsall; *Special Projects Director*, Peter G. Meyer.

The Nation (ISSN 0027-8378) is published weekly (except for the first week in January, and biweekly in July and August) by The Nation Company, Inc. © 1988 in the U.S.A. by The Nation Company, Inc., 72 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10011. (212) 242-8400. *Washington Bureau:* Suite 308, 110 Maryland Avenue N.E., Washington, DC 20002. (202) 546-2239. Second-class postage paid at New York, NY, and at additional mailing offices. International Telex: 667 155 NATION. Subscription orders, changes of address and all subscription inquiries: *The Nation*, Box 1953, Marion, OH 43305. *Subscription Price*: One year, $36; two years, $64. Add $14 for surface mail postage outside U.S. Claims for missed issues must be made within 60 days (120 days foreign) of publication date. **Please allow 6-8 weeks for receipt of your first issue and for all subscription transactions.** Back issues $3 prepaid ($4 foreign) from: *The Nation*, 72 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10011. *The Nation* is available on microfilm from: University Microfilms, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *The Nation*, Box 1953, Marion, OH 43305. This issue went to press on November 23.

EDITORIALS.

Power Broker

When the Bush League boys take the field in January, John Sununu will serve as playing coach. The three-term New Hampshire Governor is notoriously uncomfortable on the sidelines. He ran his small but strategically placed state like an owner-operated business: He centralized power in his own hands, computerized the whole system and then kept the data to himself. He drove Republicans as well as Democrats to distraction. The right-wing Manchester *Union Leader* used to call him "King John." His fellow Republicans among New Hampshire's elected officials are not solid supporters; both Senator Gordon Humphrey and Governor-elect Judd Gregg blame Sununu for President Reagan's recent order transferring command over nuclear power plant evacuation plans from local to Federal control—a last chance to save Sununu's pet installation at Seabrook.

Sununu's presence in the first wave of George Bush's appointments seems something of an anomaly. He looks out of place against the gray expanse of mandarins, bureaucrats, holdovers and insiders that already colors the Cabinet. But if there is any precedent for the Sununu aberration it is none other than Dan Quayle, a loose bazooka of a different sort whose nomination confounded Washington

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wisdom and said more about Bush's idiosyncracy than his predictability.

Of course, John Sununu is no Dan Quayle. "Dr." Sununu (he likes his honorific, which he earned in mechanical engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology) is crafty and bright, whereas the future Vice President is famous mostly for bringing down the curve in his college classes. "John is the smartest man in the world," a New Hampshire state representative said. "Just ask him; he'll tell you." But like Quayle in the campaign, he may well cause more trouble than he's worth. Just by his appointment, he has antagonized many in the Bush circle who feel that he is a usurper (exit Craig Fuller, the Veep's chief of staff since 1985), an interloper and, worst of all, a provincial.

Dissension in the White House, of course, is something of a blessing for those of us who fear that a more efficient Administration means only that bad policies will be applied more efficiently. But Sununu's particular penchant for troublemaking gives cause for much concern. Like Quayle, he represents the hard right of the Republican Party—Mario Cuomo calls him a "radical conservative"—but Sununu is not aligned with the wacko wing that produced the Quayles. Sununu rose in New Hampshire politics on the electronics- and defense-driven business boom that has transformed the state during the past two decades. His constituents are the techies and entrepreneurs who have streamed in as refugees from high-tax, high-welfare states—particularly Massachusetts.

Sununu is farther out on the right side of the political spectrum than Michael Dukakis is on the left. In Sununu's scheme of things Dukakis is the essence of everything that's wrong with liberalism. And therein lies Sununu's attraction for Bush. Sununu campaigned against Dukakis a year ago, when the Massachusetts Governor was still a dwarf among the Democratic candidates. He figured that Bush would need him in the Republican primary and he went to bat for the beleaguered Vice President after Senator Robert Dole's victory in the Iowa primary.

"John bailed Bush's ass out of the fire in the week between Iowa and New Hampshire," a state legislator recalled. "He owes him big." Not only did Sununu stump for Bush, he leaned on the media and the business community for favors to the ailing campaign. Bush is eternally grateful. In claiming victory on election night, Bush singled out New Hampshire for special thanks; what he meant was, thanks to Sununu.

Sununu was active behind the scenes in Kennebunkport last spring when the Bush team plotted to define—and destroy—Dukakis. After all, Sununu had been watching his liberal neighbor for years. He was not dazzled by the Massachusetts Miracle (in miraculous terms, New Hampshire is superior); he spotted the potential problems Dukakis would have explaining Boston Harbor and Willie Horton; and most of all, he understood how to talk dirty politics to the new class of white suburbanites who felt threatened by everything Dukakis stood for—as defined by Sununu.

Whatever else Sununu will do in the White House, he will extend the campaign against Dukakis and Dukakis clones, preparing the way for Bush's second term and continuing to discredit the Democratic opposition. He does not distinguish between ideology and competence. His appointment signals just how serious Bush is about organizing power. Let the gray guys in the Cabinet worry about budgets and policies. The political action will be in the office of Bad King John.

Northern Light

Toronto

"George Bush wants a kinder, gentler country. It's Canada." So read one anti-free trade placard before the November 21 election. In the end, Prime Minister Brian Mulroney was re-elected after a campaign that turned into an emotionally charged referendum on the U.S.-Canada Free Trade Agreement that was signed in January, ratified by the U.S. Senate and still awaits the approval of the Canadian Parliament.

Yet for Americans to interpret the victory of Mulroney's Progressive Conservatives as a mirror image of their own recent history would be to misapprehend alarmingly the fundamental distinctions between the two countries. In its form, content and results, the Canadian election was markedly different from the recent U.S. presidential race. Of the 75 percent of eligible Canadian voters who cast their ballots, the majority came out against Mulroney and free trade and in favor of either John Turner's Liberals or Ed Broadbent's left-of-center New Democratic Party. The Tory majority shrank, the Liberals more than doubled the number of their seats in Parliament and the N.D.P. achieved its heaviest ever representation.

Even before free trade began to monopolize the agenda, the Canadian campaign was issue-laden—and progressive in tone. Government-subsidized day care, the environment and abortion were all central topics. The televised debates were substantive discussions of policy differences. No room here for "What is your favorite book?" or "How would you react if your spouse were raped and murdered?"

It was through the debate format that John Turner managed to make free trade an inescapable issue for voters. Many Americans, even on the left, were surprised and perplexed by the vehement Canadian reaction against the deal, by the fear of becoming more Americanized. What Americans failed to grasp was that most Canadians actually believe they live in the better society. The audacity! And Canadians define the qualitative difference between the two systems as being not merely cultural or economic but ideological. As Professor Stephen Clarkson explains, "Canadians know that we have better social programs, a better public education system, a less violent society. And Canadians know that this is because our government has been more interventionist." The most effective argument against free trade was that it would insure, if not a loss of sovereignty, at least a shriveling of Canada's robust welfare state—to the depleted levels of the United States.

Mulroney's response to these charges illustrated just how much to the left Canada's political center of gravity lies in

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comparison to liberal-fearing America. He did not contend that closer economic ties to the United States would open up new and better alternatives to the outdated welfare state. Instead, he presented himself as the protector of the welfare safety net, arguing that free trade, far from harming social programs, would strengthen them by increasing revenues.

Mulroney won because these claims assuaged the fears of enough voters. He was also helped by a last-minute media blitz, backed by the private sector (including several U.S.-owned multinationals), which outspent the grass-roots coalition of anti-free trade groups by about 10 to 1. In addition, a number of companies attached letters to workers' paychecks warning of potential job losses or salary cuts if free trade didn't go through.

It has, of course, crossed the minds of many Canadians that Mulroney doth protest too much his love of the welfare state. Inescapably, the approval of free trade will signal dramatic economic and social changes in Canada. Yet Canadians have demonstrated that they are unwilling to submit to any willful tinkering with their welfare state. On social issues, Mulroney's political terms of reference in this campaign were to the left of Michael Dukakis's. George Bush may try to add a fifty-first star to the American flag, but he will find the red maple leaf more difficult to obliterate than he imagines.

MEREDITH LEVINE

Meredith Levine is a Toronto-based freelance journalist.

Palestine Agenda

The nineteenth session of the Palestine National Council, formally titled the "*Intifada* Meeting," was momentous and, in many great and small ways, unprecedented. There were fewer hangers-on, groupies and "observers" than ever before. Security was tighter and more unpleasant than during the 1987 P.N.C. session, also held in Algiers. Algeria had just had its own brutally suppressed *intifada*, so the presence of several hundred Palestinians and at least 1,200 members of the press was not especially welcomed by the Benjedid government, which paradoxically needed the event to restore some of its tarnished revolutionary luster. The three-and-a-half-day conclave also accomplished more than any Palestinian meeting in the post-1948 period. Above all, it secured for Yasir Arafat his place in Palestinian and world history.

None of the approximately 380 members came to Algiers with any illusion that Palestinians could again get away simply with creative ambiguity or solid affirmations of the need to struggle. The *intifada*'s momentum and its ability to have created a clear civil alternative to the Israeli occupation regime necessitated a definitive statement of support by the P.N.C. This required an unambiguous claim for sovereignty over whatever Palestinian territories were to be vacated by the occupation. There also had to be an equally unambiguous statement on peaceful resolution of the conflict between Palestinian Arabs and Israeli Jews, based on U.N. Resolutions 181 (partition), 242 and 338. In short, the P.N.C. was asking of itself nothing less than an emphatic transformation: from liberation movement to independence movement. Jordan's recent withdrawal of claims for the West Bank made the need for transformation urgent and compelling.

Everyone gathering in Algiers knew that this profound step was Arafat's: first to define, then to persuade us to take, then finally to choreograph politically. When I arrived, he handed me the Arabic draft of the declaration of statehood and asked me to render it into English. It had been written by committee, then rewritten by Mahmoud Darwish, then, alas, covered with often ludicrously clumsy insertions and inexplicable deletions. Darwish later told me that the Old Man had struck the phrase "collective memory" because, we opined, he took it as poetic. "Tell him it has a serious and even scientific meaning," Darwish implored me; "maybe he'll listen to you." He didn't, and I didn't listen when Arafat wanted other, mistaken phrases inserted.

Perhaps the oddest thing about this P.N.C.—with its obsessive postmodern rhetorical anxieties—was that we discussed the two main documents (the declaration of statehood and the political resolutions) in public debates for hours on end without a piece of paper before us. After the opening ceremonies on Saturday, the Council divided itself into two committees, the political and the *intifada*. Arafat had the texts memorized, and Nabil Shaath, brilliantly adroit chair of the political committee, had them before him. All relevant discussion took place in the riveting atmosphere of that committee, with speaker after speaker sounding off on what after all was the most significant political moment in Palestinian life since 1948. Words, commas, semicolons and paragraphs were the common talk of each recess, as if this were a convention of grammarians.

The heart of the debate was articulated by George Habash and Abu Iyad (Salah Khalaf), the first an opponent of the by now well-known substance of the political program, the second Arafat's key supporter and one of the main leaders of Fatah. Habash's express reservations concerned the clear acceptance of 242 and 338, resolutions unfriendly to Palestinians not only because they treat us simply as "refugees" but also because they contain an implicit pre-negotiating recognition of Israel. This, Habash said, was going too far too soon; there had been agreement that such tough issues as recognition, 242, borders, etc., would be handled at the international conference. Why, Habash asked, must we go forward on everything *before* the conference? He spoke passionately, saying without hesitation that he and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine wished to remain in the P.L.O. no matter what the outcome or the disagreements. To which, in a superbly meandering and yet fascinating speech, Abu Iyad said that decisions had to be made now, not only in the face of the discouraging realities of the Israeli elections but because our people needed an immediate, concrete statement of our goals. What clinched it for me was the logic of Abu Iyad's thesis that decisive clarity was necessary principally for ourselves and our friends, not because our enemies kept hectoring us to make more concessions.

By about 9:30 P.M. on Monday, November 14, the political program had been passed by a large majority in the

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political committee, and immediately afterward the whole P.N.C. was reconvened in plenary session. Habash and supporters fought each sentence almost word by word on the crucial 242/338 paragraph, which was voted on in different forms half a dozen times. The ungainly paragraph that resulted shows the effect of those battles, although the substance remains unmistakable. At one point Arafat stood up and recited the entire program from memory, indicating where the clause, sentence and paragraph breaks occurred, so that there could be no mistake about meaning, emphasis, conclusion. For the first time in P.N.C. history, voting by acclamation wasn't going to be enough; Habash had insisted on precise tallies, which emerged to his disadvantage: 253 for, 46 against, 10 abstaining. There was a sad nostalgia to what he represented, since in effect by voting against him we were taking leave of the past as embodied in his defiant gestures. The declaration ceremonies that closed the meetings were jubilant, yet somehow melancholy.

About this break with the past there could be no doubt whatever. To declare statehood on the basis of Resolution 181 was first of all to say unequivocally that an Arab Palestinian and an Israeli state should coexist in a partitioned Palestine. Self-determination would thus be for two peoples, not just for one. Most of us there had grown up with the reality (lived and remembered) of Palestine as an Arab country, refusing to concede anything more than the exigency of a Jewish state, one at our expense in the loss of our land, our society and uncountable thousands of lives. As we met, a million and a half of our compatriots were under brutal military occupation, fighting tanks and fully armed soldiers with rocks and an unbending will. For the first time also, we implicitly recognized a state that offered us nothing but the empty formulas of Camp David or the openly racist threats of "transfer." The declaration of statehood spelled out principles of equality, mutuality and social justice far in advance of anything in the region. Then too the *principle* of partition was asserted, not the territories specified in the 1947 U.N. resolution. All of us felt that since Israel has *never* declared its boundaries, we could not declare ours now; better to negotiate the question of boundaries with Israel and a confederal relationship with Jordan directly. There was no doubt, however, that we were discussing the territories occupied in 1967.

Secondly, there was absolute clarity in speaking of a peaceful settlement to the conflict. "Armed struggle" does not appear in the binding resolutions to the political program. Central to those resolutions is a long and awkward sentence endorsing an international peace conference based on 242 and 338. The language surrounding acceptance of the U.N. resolutions raises no reservations about that acceptance but simply states the obvious. Representation by the P.L.O. on an equal footing with other parties, the aegis of the Security Council, the *implementation* of 242 and 338, the centrality of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people—all these are mentioned as the *context*, the history, the Palestinian interpretation, of what we were accepting. This was crucial because 242 and 338 say nothing about the political actuality of the Palestinian people, which in 1967 seemed scarcely evident.

Thirdly, the rejection of terrorism (also affirmed in the declaration) emphatically distinguishes between resistance to occupation, to which Palestinians are entitled according to the U.N. Charter and international law, and indiscriminate violence against civilians by states or by individuals and groups. Note that there exists no all-purpose definition of terrorism, one that has international validity and impartiality of application. Also note that Israel has always arrogated to itself the right to attack civilians in the name of its security.

Finally and most important, all the resolutions clearly intend willingness to negotiate directly. There are no disclaimers about the "Zionist entity," or about the legitimacy of Israeli representatives. All the relevant passages about peace, partition and statehood in the 1964 Palestinian National Covenant are flatly contradicted by the 1988 P.N.C. resolutions. All the refusals, attacks and insults heaped on the Council's results, both by Israel and the usual array of U.S. "experts," signify consternation. Clearly, the more Palestinians take responsible and realistic positions, the less acceptable we become, not just because Palestinians want peace but because Israelis don't know what to do when peace is offered to them. There is a dispiriting continuity here between the early days of Israel's existence, when Ben-Gurion refused peace with the Arabs, and the all-out rejection trundled out today by Likud and Labor alike.

The point is not that the Council's documents are perfect and complete but that they must be interpreted as everyone in Algiers intended—as a beginning that signals a distinct break with the past, as an assertion of willingness to make sacrifices in the interests of peace, as a definitive statement of the Palestinian acceptance of the international consensus. A few days before the Algiers meeting Ariel Sharon appeared on Italian television vociferating about the need to kill Arafat. That no comparable sentiment was expressed in Algiers about an Israeli leader testifies eloquently to the real difference now between Israeli and Palestinian leaders. These are dangerous times for Palestinians; the occupation will get worse, and assassinations and full-scale political war will intensify. For once, however, the record is unmistakable as to who is for peace, who for bloodshed and suffering. But our campaign for peace must be joined.

What I cannot understand or condone is how the U.S. media—quite unlike that in the rest of the world—has internalized the rejectionism promulgated by the Israeli and U.S. establishments. Far from reading the texts as they were meant to be read, commentators persist in suggesting that whatever was said in the texts could not, by definition, be enough. Why is Israel not asked whether it is willing to coexist with a Palestinian state, or negotiate, or accept 242, or renounce violence, or recognize the P.L.O., or accept demilitarization, or allay Palestinian fears, or stop killing civilians, or end the occupation, or answer any questions at all? Perhaps the media will break their silence, as Palestinians already have.

EDWARD W. SAID

Edward W. Said, a Nation *music critic, is a member of the Palestine National Council.*

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Few Are Chosen

EDWARD SOREL

JOHN BARRYMORE WANTED TO BE A CARTOONIST, BUT WHEN HE FAILED HE WENT ON THE STAGE
GARY COOPER WANTED TO BE A CARTOONIST, BUT WHEN HE FAILED HE WENT TO HOLLYWOOD
JOHN UPDIKE WANTED TO BE A CARTOONIST, BUT WHEN HE FAILED HE SWITCHED TO WRITING.
I TOO MET WITH FAILURE INITIALLY, BUT FINALLY I SOLD A CARTOON TO THE REALIST FOR FIFTY BUCKS.
THAT WAS IN 1961... NOW I GET THREE, SOMETIMES FOUR, TIMES THAT FOR JUST A SINGLE CARTOON!
IT'S A SHAME THAT UPDIKE, COOPER, AND BARRYMORE DIDN'T PERSEVERE...
...THEY MIGHT HAVE SUCCEEDED AFTER A WHILE...
...ALTHOUGH CARTOONING ISN'T LIKE ACTING OR WRITING...
...IT REALLY TAKES A SPECIAL KIND OF TALENT.
ES

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MINORITY REPORT.

CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS

Hyderabad, Sind Province, Pakistan

When Gen. Sir Charles Napier took possession of this city in 1843, he signaled the addition of Sind to the British Empire by sending the cryptic Latin message *Peccavi*—"I have sinned." Only two modern forces can make the same claim with the same insouciance. The first is the Pakistani Army, a predominately Punjabi elite created by British colonialism and holding a title to power in all other provinces no matter who is elected. The second is the Bhutto family, which owns a huge tract of Sind centered on the dynastic estate at Larkana, and which also runs the Pakistan People's Party. The maneuverings in the aftermath of the November 16 elections, in which the P.P.P. took every seat in Sind outside Karachi, will decide whether these two forces can divide power between them or whether they are doomed to compete for it.

Even if the likeliest outcome is a power-sharing compromise, the achievement of the P.P.P. in breaking the military and clerical monopoly is considerable. The membership and mass base have endured eleven years of persecution and repression, with the whip and the gallows featuring prominently, and have not just stayed intact but have expanded. The P.P.P. held up through a campaign during which it was denied all access to television and radio (crucial in a country with over 60 percent illiteracy); during which the voting age was raised from 18 to 21 (no less crucial for the generation formed by the brutality of martial law); and during which the rump of the Zia regime used every legal and constitutional technicality to limit access to the polls, especially for women. Its emergence as the largest single party under those conditions is the clearest possible verdict on the Zia dictatorship and its backers in Washington.

Until a few weeks ago no American news analysis was complete without some glib reference to the "two ghosts" who were allegedly contending for power. Ghost number one was Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the deposed Prime Minister who was hanged in 1979 after a period of hideous maltreatment in prison. Ghost number two was Gen. Zia ul-Haq, incinerated in a plane crash on August 17. As things turned out, only one ghost made an appearance, and that was Bhutto's. So great is the revulsion at the memory of Zia that even the ruling party, running under the swiftly invented name Islamic Democratic Alliance, dropped all mention of him. His photograph was nowhere to be seen, and even the government press remarked on the completeness of his disappearance. There is a lesson here, though I doubt that the Bush team has learned it.

This is not to say that Zia has not left his mark. The Jamaat Islami Party, which is the counterpart to the fundamentalist wing of the Afghan resistance, still campaigns for his version of "Islamization," including the subjugation of women and dissent. As its leader, Qazi Hussain Ahmed, put it so pungently, the P.P.P. was "a tool of Russia and the American Jews," sworn to destroy Moslem Pakistan. Ijaz ul-Haq, son of the departed, elaborated on this by making a speech in which he accused the P.P.P. of hiring a Jewish propaganda team from London, the better to "overwhelm the people." Since the cement that binds the Zia clan, the Jamaat Islami Party and the Hizbe Islamic faction of the Afghans is and always has been American overt and covert aid, it's interesting to see whom the tax dollars actually support. Jamaat Islami is now openly calling for an invasion of India to "raise the flag of Islam on the Red Fort in New Delhi." This is only a joke until you remember how many sympathizers it has in the army, and how that army is indulged by the Pentagon.

At least for the present, however, the armed forces are likely to practice continence. Decades of direct and indirect rule have inculcated a sense of the decent interval, and the utter discredit of Zia seems to call for exactly that. It was striking on the day of the vote that military men couldn't get elected even on the P.P.P. ticket. Benazir Bhutto, who knows how to water the wine in pursuit of office, had made Gen. Tikka Khan the Secretary General of her party despite his vile role in the army massacres in Bangladesh in the early 1970s. He was heavily outvoted in Rawalpindi. The same fate overtook Air Marshal Noor Khan, who carried the Bhutto flag in Chakwal. The Pakistani repudiation of uniformed politics is therefore a rather decided and comprehensive one.

This leaves the civilian parties, particularly the P.P.P., to face the age-old problem of providing *Roti, Kapra aur Makan*—bread, clothing and shelter. They must also cope with the consequences of the army's promiscuous conduct of the Afghan war, which has hugely increased the circulation of those two great imperial currencies, guns and narcotics. Nor are those the only poisonous weeds to have sprung from the decade of enforced depoliticization. In Karachi and in Hyderabad, rivalries between native Sindis and immigrant Moslem *muhajirs* from India recently ignited into major sectarian violence. Apart from showing that the ideological foundation of the state—Islamic solidarity—is tenuous and inadequate, the disorders promised further subdivisions along tribal and regional lines. (Once you start with partition, it's hard to know where to stop.)

So here is another classic case for the student of the crisis of expectations. The immense crowds of people who turned out for the P.P.P. in every city and at every stop are thoroughly disillusioned with oligarchy, with the vanity and greed of the military caste and with Pakistan's subservience to the United States. But the P.P.P. in power would not be able to shrink the military budget by much; it is committed to the grandiose nuclear program and is sworn to a path of conciliation with the feudal element from which its leadership springs. This doesn't leave all that much surplus for the long-postponed priority of *Roti, Kapra aur Makan*. The first test of the new dispensation will be Afghanistan, where for the moment Zia's policy and Zia's clientele are being perpetuated. This will also be a test of the Bush Administration's fealty to the Reagan-Zia legacy.

(To be continued)

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ARTICLES.

I REMEMBER PEARL HARBOR

Dealing With the 'Problem Race'

CHARLES SHIRŌ INOUYE

Franklin D. Roosevelt called the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor forty-seven years ago "a day that will live in infamy," but infamy is hard to gauge. We are a nation of many peoples, and international insult is not always uniformly felt. December 7, 1941, was a fateful day for my own family. But perhaps more infamous was February 19, 1942, when President Roosevelt, a man who had posed as the immigrant's friend and as a leader with a vision of a fairer America, signed Executive Order 9066. That order eventually set apart Washington, Oregon, the western half of California and the southern third of Arizona as areas from which all persons of Japanese ancestry were to be removed. That included my father, who was living in Menlo Park, California, and my mother, who was living in Yakima, Washington. They were sent to live in a relocation camp in Wyoming.

They were both citizens of the United States and thus guaranteed certain rights by the Constitution. Their right to address the decision that would uproot them from their homes, for example, was actually honored by the creation of a forum in which all Japanese-Americans were invited to participate. These were the so-called Tolan hearings, headed by Representative John Tolan of California. This public debate on the evacuation question began on February 21, 1942, and ended on March 12. The 980-page report of the hearings eloquently describes a travesty. Set against the testimony of the military experts and those of other pro-evacuation groups (who for three decades had found a voice in the newspapers of William Randolph Hearst), the voice of my grandfather's people is weak and pitiful.

The *issei*, or first generation immigrants, not only spoke English poorly but also, having lived in segregated farming and fishing communities, had little experience as debaters. Their children, the *nisei*, had attended public schools and frequently became valedictorians and salutatorians in their pursuit of the American dream; but they were simply too young to protect themselves in such a hostile arena. What the decision-making process that led to the evacuation tells us is that an offer to participate in the democratic process does not necessarily insure justice. Invited to dine at the fox's home, the heron ate poorly.

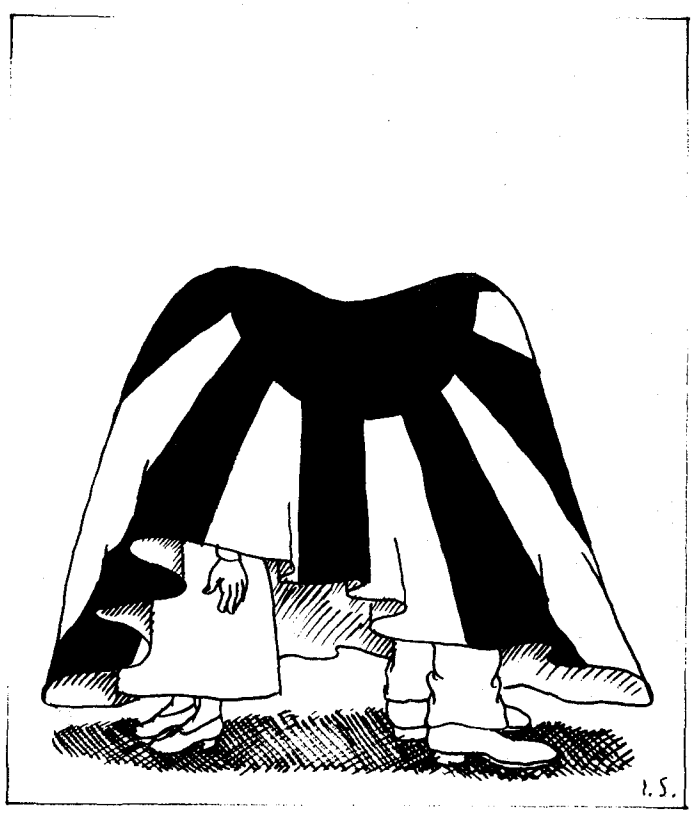
This is not to say that the forum made no difference. It did. Study the arguments of those who were in favor of the evacuation and you will find an interesting shift in strategy.

Charles Shirō Inouye is an assistant professor of Asian languages and literatures at Wesleyan University.

At first, the crux of this modest proposal to remove tens of thousands of ethnic Japanese from their homes and put them in concentration camps built in the outback of America was that the non-Japanese on the West Coast must be protected from invasion. The Army claimed that the Japanese immigrants were signaling submarines off the coast, secretly participating in other deeds of sabotage and, therefore, had to be sent somewhere else. (My mother, for instance, who had taken a job as a live-in maid for a dentist in Seattle, was interrogated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation because her bedroom window overlooked Puget Sound.) Though many such accusations were made, none were substantiated. Later, retreating from their obviously racist position, proponents of evacuation formed an argument that was at least outwardly more benign: The government of the United States must act quickly in order to protect Japanese immigrants from the whites who were seeking to harm them.

Now things were switched around—the mouse was chasing the cat. But whatever the case, this burden of protection that the military took upon itself (despite objections from the Justice Department) presupposed an insidious form of inequality. As the history of blacks and Native Americans in the United States also demonstrates, governmental protection is, for all its comforting rhetoric, too often a denial of justice and dignity. It requires restrictions of liberty and asks that the "problem race" be grateful for the many favors extended to it. Those favors would in the case of the Japanese include, to quote the stone and brass historical marker that graces what remains of the Heart Mountain camp in Wyoming, "first-class schools, electricity and plumbing."

Last summer, forty-six years after the fact, President



DRAWINGS BY ISADORE SELTZER

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Reagan signed HR 442, a bill to redress the wartime internment of Japanese-American civilians. This acknowledges the injustice of Roosevelt's act and stands as a national apology and as a tax break to those evacuees still alive. I separate the apology from the stipend because that is how the survivors of the evacuation see it. What does $20,000, to be paid over a ten-year period, mean to people who were forced from their homes by hysterical overreaction? The money is a pittance, one my parents never expected to receive and one that will give them little joy. (There is talk about pooling the money to establish scholarship funds for the needy, and to create research grants for the study of Japanese-American history.)

But the apology really matters. The bill may be essentially an attempt at restitution, but it should not be understood as something designed to restore dignity to the Japanese-Americans. While it is undeniable that the *nisei* have been fighting to regain face ever since Roosevelt's order, in truth they never lost their self-respect. Along with one suitcase of personal effects, dignity was something everyone took with them to the camps. The evacuation did not disgrace those who went but those who sent them.

The point is that if patriotism and the Pledge of Allegiance can be revived as unifying national concerns, as George Bush deployed them in the recent campaign, then so must dignity and the ability to apologize for our mistakes. This is why HR 442 is an important milestone in our journey as a nation. By seeing that justice is done, HR 442 restores our commitment to the belief that all people deserve to be treated well. As an affirmation of civil rights, this act makes all Americans a bit more humane because it admits that we as a group can make mistakes, that we can be contrite and that we can do something about our errors. Finally, the bill is important because it raises the issue of a national apology and brings into focus the relationship of the individual to the state in a way that no amount of flag-waving can.

As brilliant as fireworks may be, we can only see ourselves clearly in light that is more focused and steady. Too bad, then, that for every well-developed thought about the real state of our union there are a hundred empty slogans and a million statements of self-congratulation. Rare are the moments when nations are forced to think about themselves in something other than a celebratory or a defensive way. Japan's unconditional surrender to the Allied forces was, to bring in a relevant point of comparison, one of these rare moments. As Emperor Hirohito spoke to his people, he renounced his own divinity; and by this act the symbols and institutions that had brought a nation together to wage war suddenly lost authority. This was precisely what the United States sought. Our country, the victor, saw state Shinto as an abomination; and, after dropping nuclear bombs on two of Japan's cities, we forced a spiritual apology in order to plant the seeds of pluralism in the scorched wasteland of the Japanese soul.

What most Americans fail to realize is that the vast majority of Japanese actually do regret having fought the war. They regret it more profoundly than we, who, ironically, are now asking them to remilitarize. Led by the belief that they were a chosen and blessed nation, they engaged in a program of destruction and bloodshed that left much of East Asia in ashes. It was a hellish experience; and the remorse felt by some segments of the population is still so intense that the museums erected to the memory of Hiroshima and Nagasaki have been carefully denuded of any sign of politics, lest they become rallying points for partisans who would interfere with the orderly building of the new and improved Japan.

Consequently, the message we get as we walk past the photographs of melted buildings and torn flesh in the Hiroshima display is that science has created a terrible device, and that the device, not the people who design and use it, is evil. What do human beings have to do with nuclear destruction at all? In the museum display, there are, after all, no people except bombed people. Americans are not blamed. Not even Japan's wartime leaders are implicated by the jars of pickled tumors; and this possibly because the evil of mass murder is better understood on their side of the Pacific than it has ever been in this country. Japan's present silence on Hiroshima is the supreme understatement of our time. Only an American would think that silence means nothing.

Though the Japanese sense of national apology is complex and at times difficult to understand, one thing we can probably say is that it is profound in comparison to ours. By winning the "Good War" we lost much goodness, even though our false sense of righteousness blinds us to the loss. Self-congratulation has helped to erase our memories of atrocity. To our way of thinking, the atrocities simply did not exist. Why else would the radio commentator Paul Harvey declare that God gave us the first nuclear weapon because no other nation on earth was righteous enough to use it correctly? One can't help but wonder if Harvey's God is also the one inserted into the Pledge of Allegiance after the war, when "one nation, with liberty and justice for all" became "one nation, *under God*, with liberty and justice for all."

The addition to the original Pledge of Allegiance, some will say, is an improvement because it clarifies the divine nature of our state and the very point of our unity. Having made the Japanese renounce their divinity, we apparently feel a bit more upbeat about ours. But if we are united by this godliness and even made free and just by it (as the Pledge can be interpreted), then we must be free enough and

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righteous enough to ask the overwhelming question: Who sent the Japanese-Americans to the wasteland?

Even God has only one vote in a democracy such as ours. Our mistakes should be recognized as our own, and so must our regrets and apologies. The decision to evacuate the Japanese from the West Coast and southern Arizona was made by people—not by evanescent powers such as those lurking behind passive-voiced Reaganisms like "mistakes were made." If we as a democratic people have anything to congratulate ourselves about, it is not our ability to obliterate Hiroshima and Nagasaki but our power to pass a bill that redresses a national mistake, that makes us a bit nobler because of its apology. □

A TALE OF TWO CONCLAVES

Campus Voices Right and Left

JON WIENER

Political conferences can be disorienting. At a meeting of an organization called the National Association of Scholars, for example, one does not expect to find advertisements for the Dix Gun Works catalogue, chocolate-chip cookies in a "spectacular" Statue of Liberty tin ("the perfect gift") and a videocassette entitled "How to Raise Your Self-Esteem." Nor, at a left-wing gathering on anticommunism, does one anticipate hearing praise for the American press from a Communist journalist. But for all the surprises, these two recent conclaves went a long way toward illuminating the preoccupations and obsessions of the right and the left as they steel themselves for combat in the coming Age of Bush.

"Reclaiming the Academy: Responses to the Radicalization of the University" was the title of the conference held by the National Association of Scholars, which is not really a large national association but a small group of conservative professors funded by the right-wing Olin and Scaife foundations. They espouse what their statement of purpose calls a "renewed assertiveness" against feminism, ethnic studies and literary theory. The meeting, held over the weekend of November 12-13 in the fading splendor of the Roosevelt Hotel in midtown Manhattan, was attended by nearly 300 people and looked like an ordinary faculty gathering: older men in tweed jackets, a few women, a single black.

Besides the "Liberty Tree Catalogue" with its gun and cookie ads, the book exhibits displayed literature about the English Language Amendment to the Constitution ("E.L.A." to its proponents) and the scholars' new journal, *Academic Questions*, the first number of which features Barnard College historian Rosalind Rosenberg, who seems to be a hero in these circles for standing up for Sears Roebuck when the company was charged by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission with sex discrimination [see Wiener, "Women's History on Trial," *The Nation*, September 7, 1985].

In a large room with green walls, dusty chandeliers and torn carpets, the scholars' president, Stephen Balch, opened the conference by announcing that it was "the beginning of a movement . . . to end the servitude of the university to forces with contempt for intellectual values." Balch, a fast-talking man, looks a little like Woody Allen and told a few jokes: The goal of the left faculty, he said, is to turn the whole curriculum into "oppression studies." The audience guffawed appreciatively.

Balch said the organization's aims included "informing communities about the quality of higher education in their areas," which seems to mean trying to get local right-wing groups to attack ethnic studies programs and campus women's centers. He concluded his call to arms by lamenting that "unlike the ideologues of the left, we did not see campus political struggle as part of our vocation." Another speaker hit the same dour note, reporting plaintively that right-wing students today "envy student radicals for their sense of commitment."

Next came Herbert London, a New York University dean and columnist for the *New York City Tribune*, sister paper of the Rev. Sun Myung Moon's *Washington Times*, and newly announced G.O.P. candidate for mayor of New York City. He denounced the "Derrida-ization of the curriculum," including "Marxism and minimalism." Minimalism? The trouble with including literature by women and nonwhites in the core curriculum, he argued, is that "it does not lead us toward our true humanity." London posed the big questions: "What must we do to give our lives value [and] certify that we are not headed for a meaningless death?" The answer, implicit in the rest of his talk: fight feminism.

Keynote speaker Jeane Kirkpatrick branded the scholars' academic enemies "the fascist left." But the scholars' real hero was Alan Kors, a rumpled, bearded intellectual historian at the University of Pennsylvania who was a Princeton University student during the 1960s. "The immediate threat to academic freedom," he proclaimed, "comes from antiharassment policies, racial awareness programs and the enshrinement of 'diversity' as a value for the university." The antiharassment policies in question prohibit unwanted sexual remarks or actions in the classroom, among other places. Kors sees these policies as threatening professors' academic freedom, since a student could complain that a lecture contained "unwanted sexual remarks." The new "academic totalitarians" behind these policies, Kors said, are "the women's centers, the lesbians and gays."

The racial awareness programs Kors attacked have been a typical university response to outbreaks of racial tension or violence on campus; Kors denounced such programs as efforts at "thought control." Waving his arms and yelling about the dangers of "tolerance and diversity," Kors urged his fellow association members to "use ridicule" against blacks, gays and feminists. The audience cheered. "Our opponents are filled with resentments born of marginality," he

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concluded. In fact, the conference demonstrated that it is the right-wing faculty who are filled with resentment, because they know it is they who have been marginalized—by the intellectual energy and commitment of the academic left.

While the National Association of Scholars snarled in New York City, more than 1,300 people gathered in Cambridge, Massachusetts, to discuss "Anticommunism and the U.S.: History and Consequences" at a conference sponsored by the Institute for Media Analysis held at Harvard University. Many thought anticommunism was losing its rationale, since Reagan himself has given up his "evil empire" talk to praise Mikhail Gorbachev. The *Boston Herald* provided a stiff antidote to this view. Columnist Dan Feder suggested that "a group of roaches [had] scheduled a meeting to protest the effects of DDT."

Three generations of roaches milled around Harvard's glass and concrete Science Center: old leftists, 1960s movement people and today's student activists. The different generations had different agendas: the old Communist Party members talked about the costs of anticommunism over the past forty years; one silver-haired man argued, "We gave something to America nobody else did," and another said poignantly, "Anticommunism ruined my life." The younger people focused more on the way anticommunism today impoverishes American political culture. Arlene Goldbard, founder of the Institute for Cultural Democracy, maintained that "anticommunism has shrunk our ability to imagine and discuss alternative futures."

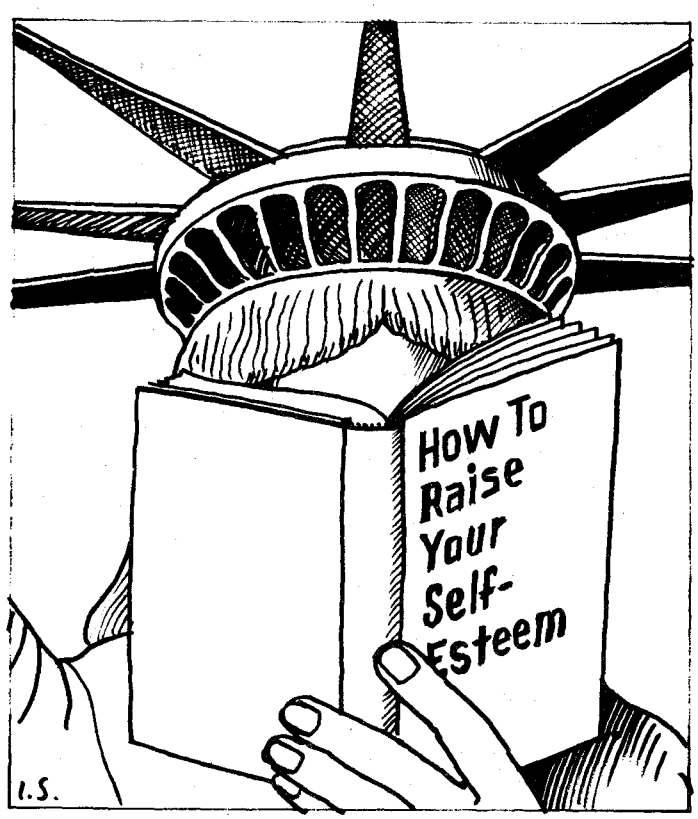
David Montgomery, a labor historian at Yale University who had been a C.P. union organizer in the 1950s, recalled for the audience the progressive agenda of 1945: full employment based on government planning and investment; increased union organizing; a fair employment law to protect black workers; national health insurance; public housing; world peace based on cooperation with the Soviet Union through the United Nations. What happened to that agenda? In 1946 the Republicans won control of Congress for the first time since the Depression by launching a campaign against "Communism, corruption and chaos." And in 1948 Truman followed suit. The "missing agenda" of 1946, Montgomery argued, provides the clearest measure of the costs of anticommunism.

The conference was a celebration of old left heroes and victims: Cheddi Jagan, former Prime Minister of British Guyana, twice overthrown by Central Intelligence Agency–backed coups; 85-year-old Virginia Durr, one of the few white people in Alabama to support the Montgomery bus boycott in 1954 (called before the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee, she told its chair, Senator John Stennis of Mississippi, "You're common as pig tracks"); Jack O'Dell, Martin Luther King Jr.'s direct mail fund-raiser. President Kennedy personally told King to fire O'Dell, whispering, "He's a Communist," and King reluctantly did. Today O'Dell is director of international affairs for the National Rainbow Coalition.

At the Friday evening symposium, seven panelists grappled chaotically with the topic of who sets the news agenda. An unlikely lovefest developed between Karl E. Meyer, an editorial writer at *The New York Times*, and fellow panelist Gianfranco Corsini of Italy's Communist daily, *L'Unita*. Meyer boasted of his longtime friendship with Corsini, and the Italian, in turn, praised both Meyer and the mainstream press Meyer works for, lauding it for the vast amount of information it offers each day. He then rambled on for so long that panelists William Styron and Alexander Cockburn nodded off, the latter perhaps predictably.

The conference featured a Cockburn family panel. "Which Cockburn is that—the good one or the bad one?" a liberal journalist asked. The "good" one is Patrick, former Moscow correspondent for the London *Financial Times*, now at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace; wearing a dark blue suit, be bore a striking resemblance to the middle-aged T.S. Eliot. The "bad" Cockburn is, of course, *The Nation*'s Alexander; he wore a florid Hawaiian shirt to avoid, he explained, "the K.G.B. look." One Cockburn argued that "the eternal verities of 'the Soviet threat' will not be undermined by the realities of *glasnost*. The American military budget is based not on Soviet actions but on America's economic needs." The only way to cut military spending, he concluded, is to challenge corporate power directly. Another Cockburn criticized Soviet secrecy, exemplified by Russia's attempt to conceal the Chernobyl disaster. The failure of that cover-up, he argued, was a turning point toward a greater openness in reporting events. (When this analysis was denounced as "anti-Sovietism" by one member of the audience, one of the brothers said, "Patrick, say something nice about the Soviet Union.")

One of the sharpest debates took place at the culture panel. Meredith Tax, a feminist and author of the novels *Rivington Street* and the recently published *Union Square*, asked why



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the personal experience of Communist Party life had not been explored in American novels with the kind of insight European writers like Doris Lessing have shown. "I don't think it's the ghost of Joe McCarthy," she said. "I think it's the ghost of Joe Stalin, a Stalinist way of thinking about the U.S. and about literature that still has a hold on many minds. Censorship is bad, but self-censorship is worse. The truth will not hurt anything that deserves to be cherished." Howard Fast, a former Communist and blacklist victim and a best-selling author, disagreed strenuously with Tax, whom he accused of "slanders against the party." Fast concluded, "Communism should not be written about by examining its sores. . . . We were a handful of people who moved this country. We must put *this* into books."

The panel "Radicals and Anticommunism" examined the question, How can the left make critical judgments about the Soviet Union and the C.P. without echoing or adding to official anticommunism? Anne Braden, for forty years an activist in the Southern civil rights movement, posed the question well but had no answer. Richard Healey, executive director of *Nuclear Times*, said the peace movement ought to criticize Soviet missiles in Eastern Europe and that such criticism should not be attacked as "Red-baiting," which he called "a term that avoids thought." The next speaker was Judith Leblanc, national organization secretary of the C.P., U.S.A. She said "anticommunism is a weapon to undermine the struggle of the working class against capitalism." People believe the country has become more conservative under Reagan, but "the Communist Party has a more accurate feel for where the people are. . . . Mass thinking is shifting to the left. . . . We have confidence in the forward motion of the working class." So much for the issue of left-wing criticism of the party.

Old leftists dominated many of the question periods, and various people argued that "anti-Sovietism is the most virulent form of anticommunism," or that "you have to look at the source of anticommunism: capitalism," or that "the Frankfurt School were international pimps for the bourgeoisie." This rhetoric annoyed many younger radicals, reminding them of why they had broken away from the old left in the 1960s.

Carl Bernstein (of Woodward, Bernstein and Watergate) came out as a Red Diaper baby. "I am a child of the old left," he announced. "The F.B.I. came to my bar mitzvah." His father, he said, was director of organization for the United Public Workers, a union of Federal employees expelled from the A.F.L.-C.I.O. for being "Communist dominated." The elder Bernstein served as counsel to 700 Federal employees called before Security Loyalty boards beginning in the Truman years. "The laundry business took a turn to the left in the 1950s—because people like my father went into it after losing their jobs." Bernstein will tell the story of his family's life under the blacklist in a book due out next year.

The conference ran with surprisingly few glitches, unusual for the left. The inevitable problems were met with good humor. The second day a thousand people sat down for lunch, or tried to, in Harvard's cavernous old Memorial Hall, where the speakers were John Henry Faulk and Jessica Mitford. The food ran out before everyone was seated, and late arrivals wandered hungrily among the tables. Those who managed to get lunch shared it with the less fortunate. Princeton English Professor Andrew Ross called this "an experience of primitive communism."

The conference was financed by grants from eight foundations and twenty-six individuals, including ecologist Abby Rockefeller. The ice cream was donated by Ben & Jerry's. □

CAMELOT AND DALLAS

The Entangling Kennedy Myths

JEFFERSON MORLEY

November 22 was, as always, a national commemoration of two American myths: Camelot and conspiracy. The television specials, the books, the Op-Ed commentary all focused on either the timeless glory of the Kennedy years or on previously undetected machinations, real or imagined, behind his murder. On the one hand, the yearning for morally heroic leadership; on the other, the fear of undemocratic plots. The anniversary of the assassination endures as a national rite because it brings together these two elemental themes of American history.

Camelot and conspiracy are shorthand for two different ways in which Americans make sense of national public life. What gives November 22 its enduring pull on the public imagination is the constant and unsettling tension between the two. John F. Kennedy's Camelot was a modern version of John Winthrop's "city upon a hill." In this myth of history, the American story is proclaimed by great and attractive men. The conspiracy theories of Dallas are an installment in the American populist tradition of anti-Masonry, muckraking and McCarthyism, official history seen as a ruse perpetrated by unaccountable elites. American history is manipulated by unseen hands. Each November 22, we can try out the view from Winthrop's hill and from the Grassy Knoll.

Americans appear to believe in both myths. In a recent poll, 30 percent of the respondents said Kennedy was the "greatest" President of the United States, more than cited any other President. Polls taken on the assassination since the late 1960s show that four out of five respondents do not believe the Warren Commission's explanation of the assassination. An ABC-*Washington Post* poll in 1983 found that 80 percent believe more than one person was responsible for the gunfire in Dealey Plaza.

But if the Warren Commission could not, or would not, uncover the truth, if Camelot could be undone by hidden plotters, which myth of history makes more sense? This is the underlying symbolic question of November 22, and we commemorate Kennedy's death in order to mull that over. "What has become unravelled since that afternoon in

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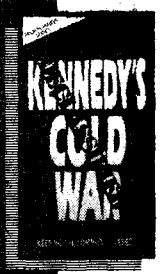

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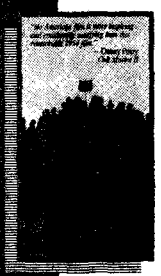

This film is a product not of the China of today, but of Red China's Cultural Revolutionary era: a period when the most radical and histrionic thinking strove to turn China's immense population into martyrs for Chairman Mao's ideas.

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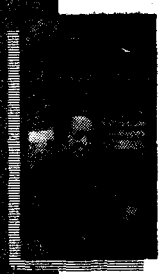

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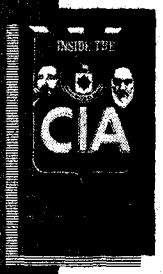

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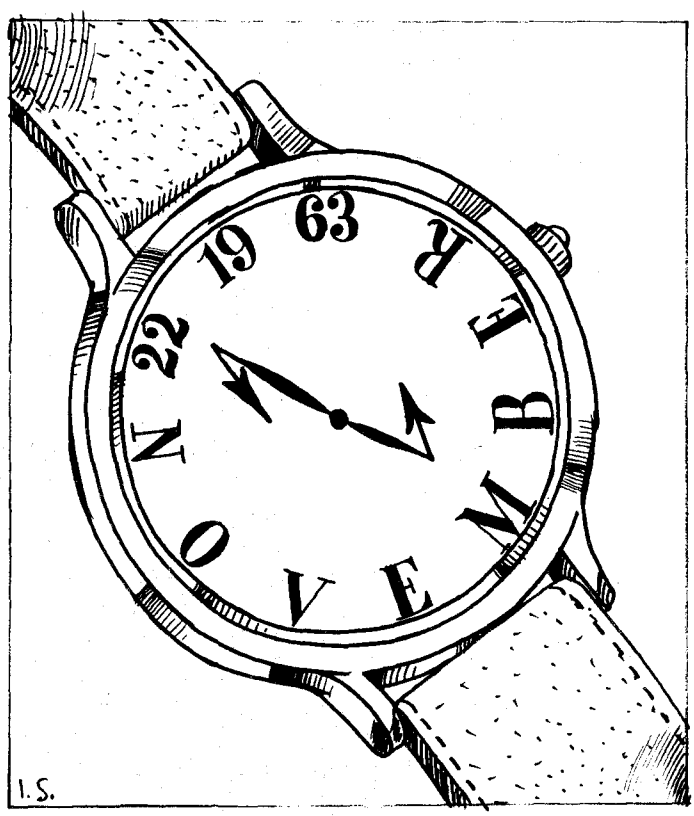
Dallas," writes Don DeLillo, author of the best-selling novel *Libra*, an imaginative re-creation of the assassination, "is not the plot, of course, not the dense mass of character and events, but the sense of a coherent reality most of us shared." The anniversary of the Kennedy assassination is the occasion for trying to regain that "coherent reality."

The assassination took on this purpose almost immediately. In a string of reassuring pop best-sellers, Kennedy's death was reconstructed to make sense of public life torn apart by violence. In books like *Night of Camp David*, *The President's Plane Is Missing*, *The Man* and *Seven Days in May*, Camelot and conspiracy were combined to revive the dead Kennedy. The apparent threat to the fictional President actually presaged his vindication before the world.

The basic plot device of these books is simple: The American presidency faces mortal peril from unknown but sinister forces—a falling roof, a missing plane, madness or military plotters. The threat to the integrity of the President, however, is matched by the President's own bold measures, which promise worldwide disarmament, racial harmony or some other political breakthrough. The presidency survives the threat and the nation emerges a better and safer place. During the national crises in these books (and the films made of some of them), history is always guided by the skillful hand of the pragmatic liberal leader.

But in the 1970s came revelations of Kennedy's plans to assassinate foreign leaders, of his sexual license, his bugging of Martin Luther King Jr. The Kennedy assassination was reworked, especially by Hollywood, to present a different American reality. Camelot often was portrayed as a hoax, conspiracy as realism.

Hollywood gave its mass audience a deeply suspicious view of elites. The belief in conspiracy, which burst out around 1966, has always been derided by elite commentators. The National Commission on Violence, appointed in June 1968, insisted that doubts about the Warren Commission were caused not by the probe's obvious flaws but by "primal anxieties created by the archetypal crime of parricide." Hollywood, in movies like *Executive Action*, *Winter Kill*, *Nashville*, *Taxi Driver* and *The Parallax View*, responded that the people were not sick, the system was.



In Alan Pakula's *The Parallax View*, Warren Beatty plays a newspaper reporter who discovers that the agents of the mysterious Parallax Corporation are behind the assassinations of two promising Kennedy-like politicians. After witnessing the second assassination, Beatty races to tell the truth, only to be gunned down by men who have framed him as the killer. A Warren-like commission concludes that the investigative reporter was the assassin, a "confused and distorted" lone madman. This is paranoia squared: Those who expose the secret manipulators of history will be blamed for their crimes.

Martin Scorsese's *Taxi Driver* is more subtle. Robert De Niro is Travis Bickle, a cabdriver with a crush on a pretty woman who works on the campaign staff of presidential candidate Charles Palantine. As Travis woos her, we see the imitation Kennedy candidate in the background intoning, "We ARE the people." Far from being a great leader, he is a precursor of Dan Quayle. The campaign aide spurns Travis and he next tries to rescue a young prostitute from the city streets. She answers his old-fashioned morality by mouthing the clichés of "liberation" and rejects him as well.

Travis buys a gun, and in a hotel room aims it at the traffic below, as if seeing redemption from the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository. He has gone mad and, heavily armed, closes in on a Palantine rally where he is chased by the Secret Service. Humiliated, he turns his murderous rage on the men who abuse the young hooker. And when he wakes up from this bloody rampage he finds himself celebrated in the tabloids, famous for fifteen minutes.

Taxi Driver was a disconcerting variation on assassination mythology because it inverted both the myth of Camelot and of conspiracy. Travis is not an assassin of morality but a moral assassin who pathetically fails to shape history by shedding blood. He is not the agent, witting or unwitting, of sinister unseen forces but their degraded victim. In the film, society's ideals of glamour, the buck and fast sex are the real conspiracy against Everyman. The sense of helplessness created by political assassination is not an isolated incident in otherwise normal public life, but the enduring nature of urban reality.

The popular mistrust of official history in the 1970s was so deep it was comic. In 1979 a Congressional investigating committee concluded that the Kennedy assassination was the result of a political conspiracy. "Next thing you know," Johnny Carson, emcee of the *Zeitgeist*, gibed that night, "they'll be blaming World War II on Hitler."

With the onset of the Reagan era, such cynicism was muted. Ronald Reagan restored Hollywood style to the White House and claimed, not always implausibly, to be heir to the Kennedy legacy. Emulation of the rich and fa-

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mous became a refuge from the disintegration of public life seen in *Taxi Driver*. Camelot and conspiracy in Dallas were domesticated for prime time. "Who shot J.F.K.?" became "Who shot J.R.?"

By November 1983, the Camelot backlash was in full swing. The twentieth anniversary of the assassination received even more media exposure than had the anniversaries of 1978 and 1973—much of it devoted to nostalgia about the Kennedy family and the Kennedy "charm." The underside of Camelot was acknowledged, then dismissed as unimportant. Adam Walinsky, a former Robert Kennedy aide turned Reagan supporter, asserted the prevailing elite mood in *The New York Times*: "We are done with the debunking."

As for conspiracy, there also was a certain (perhaps understandable) impatience with the rich ambiguities of the assassination. *The Washington Post* said the truth would never be known. A *Los Angeles Times* reporter dared to conclude that the Warren Commission was right. *Newsweek* left the public misgivings about the government's version of events to an inarticulate barber in Iowa. The magazine asked who was responsible for the Kennedy assassination. "People in general, I guess, or the higher-ups," the man answered. "In other words, not just your run-of-the-mill people that are walking the streets."

This year's twenty-fifth anniversary was, as they say, the biggest yet. The presidential campaign, echoing with themes of Kennedy and conspiracy, was a prelude. Dukakis and Quayle both packaged themselves as Kennedys and failed. Bush packaged liberalism as a kind of conspiracy and succeeded. Updating Joe McCarthy and Phyllis Schlafly, he presented the L-word as an ongoing plot of a "card-carrying" elite against the common man. Reagan again linked himself to Kennedy, great leaders who provided a bulwark against the conspiracy that dared not speak its name.

In commemorations of the anniversary of the assassination itself, conspiracy returned with a vengeance. Several TV specials and books identify the Mafia as the culprit. In DeLillo's *Libra*, Camelot is rotten with conspiracies. The change in mood from 1983 was exemplified by the NBC miniseries *Favorite Son*. Five years ago, the miniseries of the assassination was *JFK*, a pious epic of Camelot starring Martin Sheen. *Favorite Son*, by contrast, was a satiric romp through the intrigues of the Kennedy and Reagan years: attempted assassination, Latin American counterrevolutionaries, rogue C.I.A. plots, kinky sex performed as frequently as possible and a genial grandpa of a President who sets everything right at the end.

If only the unsettling celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary could be concluded so neatly. Camelot and conspiracy are not just tokens of our nostalgia but fundamental questions of the political order. Is history beyond the reach of ordinary Americans? Can (or should) the United States recapture the imperial grandeur of the Kennedy years? In reliving what DeLillo calls "the six seconds that broke the back of the American century," we feel a deep unspoken tension. That's why the gunfire in Dealey Plaza still scares us, still rings in our ears. □

American Jews

(*Continued From Front Cover*)

Now movement has concluded that silence in the face of Likud hard-lining may be an even greater threat to Israel's security. "The path of least resistance—privately criticizing Israel but publicly supporting it or remaining silent—is actually a dramatic betrayal of the interest of our people," wrote Michael Lerner, editor of the Jewish journal *Tikkun*, in the March issue. "Americans must use every possible means to convey to the Israelis . . . that Israel is in deep jeopardy and that the occupation must end."

Even Jewish establishmentarians to the right of Hertzberg and Lerner have demanded that Israel be more flexible. Morris Abram, head of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, a centrist umbrella for forty-five Jewish groups that has consistently supported Shamir, warned Israel's leaders early this year that "it will be increasingly difficult to maintain support for Israel if conditions don't improve." Rabbi Alexander Schindler, the dovish president of Reform Jewry's Union of American Hebrew Congregations (U.A.H.C.) and a former chair of the presidents' conference, lambasted the Israeli policy of putting down the riots by administering beatings and called for an international conference. So did the American Jewish Congress, another liberal group.

Such talk represented a profound breakthrough in relations between American Jews and Israel. Yet no sooner had this dissent broken out last winter, in the wake of the *intifada*, than it seemed to peak. Israel's Foreign Minister, Shimon Peres, had hammered Shamir even before the uprising for his refusal to move toward an international peace conference, and a few American groups, like Schindler's U.A.H.C. and the A.J.C., followed suit. But like Shamir, Peres has refused to deal with the Palestine Liberation Organization—and the American dissidents retreated behind a Mafia-like *omertà* on this central issue in the quest for peace in the Middle East. Jerusalem's spell had not lost its power to mesmerize even the most dovish of American Jewish leaders who, in more candid moments, concede that any "peace process" without the P.L.O. or its seal of approval can only be a political charade. Just when the American Jewish community needs its own Anwar el-Sadat, its pulpits and daises have filled only with ersatz Shimon Pereses.

The history of American Jewish dissent is, in part, the story of the failure of Israeli doves to find a welcome anywhere but on the margins of the American Jewish community. Israeli editorialists, academics, peace activists and peace-minded politicians have been arguing for years that the continued occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip will destroy the Jewish and democratic character of Israel and that it is time to talk directly with the Palestinians. The

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Edward Tivnan is the author of The Lobby: Jewish Political Power and American Foreign Policy, *the paperback edition of which was published by Touchstone in October.*

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same views in American Jewish circles are attacked by many as disloyal or pro-Arab. Any urge to criticize Israel runs up against formidable psychological roadblocks: the abiding insecurity of Diaspora Jews, fear of another Holocaust, the reluctance to criticize a democratically elected government, a reticence to second-guess Israel's security policies born out of respect for the daily dangers that citizens face, the nagging guilt of some American Jews that they have not moved to Israel, as all good Zionists, by definition, must do.

More important, though, is the role played by the pro-Israel lobby in managing and containing dissent. In fact, the lobby was created in the 1950s to institutionalize the illusion that American Jews supported Israel unequivocally. The presidents' conference exists only to offer a Jewish "consensus" on Israeli matters to the White House; the goal of the only registered lobbyist for Israel on Capitol Hill—the American Israeli Public Affairs Committee—is to inspire pro-Israel legislation and muffle criticism of the Jewish state.

But by 1973, a small influential group of young Jewish intellectuals, rabbis and former civil rights and antiwar activists began to worry that American Jewish support of Israel had become slavish. They formed Breira—the Hebrew word for "alternative" or "choice." The alternative that Breira offered American Jews was to ally themselves with the small but growing peace movement in Israel concerned that its leaders might not be serious about a nonviolent solution to the "Palestinian problem." By mid-decade, Breira numbered upward of 1,000 members eager to bring an important segment of Israeli opinion to American Jewish politics. Attached to the group's 1975 manifesto was a paraphrase of Isaiah 62:1: "For the sake of Zion, we shall not be silent."

The campaign to gag Breira was quick and brutal. The Zionist Organization of America derided the group as the "Jewish spokesman of the P.L.O. and the mythical Palestinians." Breira leaders were summoned to Israeli consulates in Boston and Philadelphia and told that criticism amounted to an attack against the state. A slick pamphlet sponsored by Americans for a Safe Israel, a group aligned with Israel's religious-nationalist settler movement, Gush Emunim ("Bloc of the Faithful"), slandered Breira as a front for anti-Zionists and the P.L.O. The group's funds soon dried up and, in 1977, so did Breira.

A few years later, representatives of Peace Now arrived in the United States expecting to be embraced by the organized American Jewish community. Instead, this patriotic Zionist organization founded by kibbutzniks and army combat officers was treated by the Jewish establishment as a kind of Israeli lunatic fringe. But by the early 1980s, a few American Jewish grandees began echoing the concerns of Breira and Peace Now as Menachem Begin sought to convert the Diaspora from mainstream Zionism to his own vision of a Greater Israel, which included the West Bank. Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982 opened another crack in Jewish solidarity: Philip Klutznick, former head of B'nai B'rith International, a founder of the presidents' conference and Jimmy Carter's Secretary of Commerce, called on the Reagan Administration to force Israel to withdraw and accept the Palestinians at the peace table.

After news broke of the massacres at the Sabra and Shatila camps, Arthur Hertzberg wrote a piece for *The New York Times* Op-Ed page titled "Begin Must Go." Rabbi Schindler demanded that Begin fire Defense Minister Ariel Sharon, the architect of the Lebanon invasion; he also announced that he and other American Jewish leaders would no longer "be used like cows . . . milked, both for financial and moral support," promising that "our open criticism will continue and increase." (Begin denounced Schindler as "more American than Jew.") By 1985, Klutznick was so embittered by the personal attacks on his own motives for dissenting that he went one step farther and called for a Palestinian state, "in one form or another," on the West Bank.

Yet no other major leader followed Klutznick, at least not in public. For, once the furor over Lebanon and Sabra and Shatila had subsided, the Jewish establishment returned to its role as rubber stamp. It remained publicly silent in the face of the Likud government's authorizations of more Jewish settlements in the West Bank and its rejection of the "land for peace" formula that has been Israeli and U.S. policy for two decades. A surge in terrorist incidents outside Israel was used to justify blind support of Israeli policy.

But according to surveys of Jewish opinion, most Jews have rejected the Likud hard line, 2 to 1, for a decade. The presidents' conference may have applauded Shamir during his visit to the United States last March, but, according to the most recent poll reported by the American Jewish Com-

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mittee, 53 percent of American Jews favored Peres in the recent election. In a similar poll by the *Los Angeles Times* last April, two-thirds of the American Jews surveyed preferred some form of political accommodation with the Palestinians, and more than 60 percent favored the plan of Secretary of State George Shultz, which calls for an international peace conference—both of which Israel's Prime Minister has rejected categorically.

Clearly, organized Jewish groups and their leadership do not represent the Jews of America, 60 percent of whom do not bother to affiliate with any of these groups. Indeed, overprotective leaders have misrepresented the opinions of the nation's Jews to Washington since 1977, when Israeli voters brought Menachem Begin's right-wing Likud coalition to power. The Jewish establishment has supported the Likud hard-liners; most Jews have supported the moderates. Jewish leaders still prefer keeping their criticisms of Israel "in-house"; most American Jews are ready to go public. (Fifty-six percent, according to the recent American Jewish Committee poll, believe it proper to criticize Israel in public.) "My goal in speaking out is to stop this pretense that there is only Shamir's Israel," explains Hertzberg. "It must be said that a majority of the Diaspora are not behind him, and I will not allow him to put us in the position where we can't speak up for the moderate half of Israel without being terrorized."

The presidents' conference is unlikely to join Hertzberg and other dissidents, pleading its role as a consensus body to excuse the group from addressing the hard choices facing all friends of Israel. After the November 1 election, Morris Abram told a Jewish newspaper that the Likud might be better able to guide Israeli hard-liners to the peace table. Two weeks later, Abram dismissed the P.L.O.'s new diplomatic initiative, saying, "What we have here is a declaration for propaganda use" [see Edward W. Said, page 637].

But American Jewish doves—adamant that their criticism constitutes genuine loyalty—are no longer going to let the Jewish establishment make the only response to these developments. Last April, a coalition of twenty Jewish groups, including the New Jewish Agenda and the Labor Zionist Alliance, demonstrated in New York City against the Likud's rejection of territorial compromise. More than 6,000 Jews have signed the agenda's petition calling for an international conference that includes the P.L.O. Others have gone so far as to create a political action committee, the Israeli-Palestine Peace PAC, to support Congressional candidates who will back a two-state solution in the Holy Land.

The victorious Likud's renewed rejection of any form of withdrawal from the occupied territories sets the scene for a confrontation with American policy centered around the land for peace formula. One next step for the United States would be to press Likud to the negotiating table by threatening to cut aid to Israel. But not even diehard American anti-Likudniks would support that tactic. "It's treason," says Hertzberg. "The moment you say cut aid, you're delivering the good guys in Israel as well as the bad guys to their enemies." Shamir's American critics now fear a backlash if the sympathy many Jews feel for the Palestinians fails to produce a partner for peace. Thus, it is unlikely that the major Jewish groups will follow the New Jewish Agenda's call for P.L.O. representation in the peace process, at least for now.

The *Los Angeles Times* poll only confirms skepticism and confusion within the Jewish community about the P.L.O. as a negotiating partner. While two-thirds of those polled want to deal with the Palestinians and 41 percent believe that "racism was involved in the attitudes of the Israelis toward the Arabs," they reject U.S.-P.L.O. negotiations 2 to 1. (A majority of non-Jewish Americans favor such talks.) The polls did not ask with whom Israel should be talking about the future of the West Bank. "If we truly want peace, then we will have to talk to the people with whom we can make peace," says Ezra Goldstein, co-chair of the agenda's task force on the Middle East, which intends to campaign against "the demonization of the Palestinians."

At the moment, all these concerns have been sidetracked by the heated disagreement over Shamir's postelection promise to the religious parties that he would narrow the definition of "who is a Jew" to exclude Reform and Conservative converts, thus insuring that Likud would be able to form a majority coalition. But protests by secular Israelis and American Jews may be causing second thoughts. As of this writing, Likud and Labor were exploring forming a new national unity government with Labor as the junior partner. That prospect undoubtedly heartens the American Jewish establishment, which fears that a change in the law would alienate many American Jews.

Given the Likud's imminent success in forming a new government, it has to be asked: Aside from the "who is a Jew" issue, will all this criticism have any effect on Shamir's policies, or Washington's acquiescence to them? The Prime Minister's critics in Israel had hoped Shamir's contempt for the Shultz plan would earn him the stick when he visited Washington last spring. Instead, he returned home with a basketful of carrots—the promise of seventy-five F-16 fighter-bombers and the assurance that a series of close "strategic cooperation" deals would be institutionalized. The following month, Shultz stopped in Jerusalem to sign a memorandum of understanding between the two countries formally designating Israel as "a major non-NATO ally of the United States."

Certainly, the United States should not turn its back on Israel. But a way has to be found to persuade American Jews that they must follow their inclinations toward moderation and compromise even in the face of Israeli reservations. *Who* to persuade them? A place in Jewish history is assured anyone able to galvanize the questioning majority of American Jews into a genuine peace movement. And when the Israeli Prime Minister inevitably attacks the Americans for "meddling in the affairs of the democratic state," they might unfurl a remark by one of the Jewish right's own heroes, Ariel Sharon. In 1980, when the U.S. representative to the United Nations voted for a resolution condemning the Begin government's policy of settling Jews on the West Bank, Sharon joined American Jews in roasting the Carter Administration: "I don't like to interfere with internal United States affairs," explained Sharon, "but the question of Israeli security is a question for Jews everywhere in the world." □

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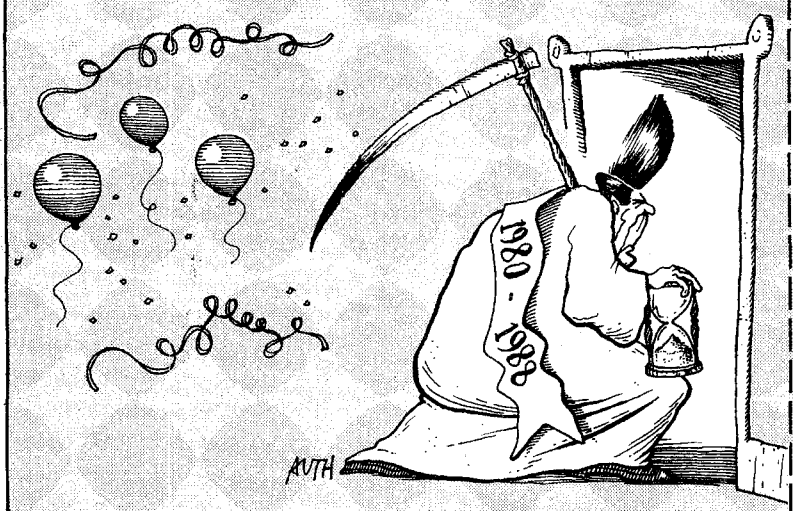
"Goodbye Ronnie . . ."



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BOOKS & THE ARTS.

With Friends Like These

HARRIET RITVO

ANIMAL LIBERATORS: Research and Morality. *By Susan Sperling. University of California Press. 247 pp. $19.95.*

The animal liberation movement has offered Americans some powerful images during the past few years—laboratories in flames and maimed animals, outraged demonstrators and angry scientists. The photographs of blue-jeaned, placard-waving crowds that adorn many media accounts of pro-animal activism (as well as the jacket of *Animal Liberators*) recall the student protests of the 1960s. Public sympathy for even the most confrontational strategies by animal liberationists has been surprisingly widespread in these conservative times. And if relatively few people wish personally to kidnap chimpanzees or torch scientific institutions, many do give money to animal defense organizations and vote for such restraints on research as pound seizure laws (which prohibit research laboratories from claiming abandoned animals). As a result of this powerful if diffuse grass-roots support, the authorities that animal liberationists challenge have responded in various ways. The intellectual establishment (mostly represented by scientists in this case) is aggressive and confrontational, while public officials are reluctant to act and often more than willing to let the protesters have their say.

The widespread appeal of the animal liberation movement (to use the term loosely, as it is used in this book) and the sometimes startling political realignments it has created suggest that it reflects something significant about contemporary American culture. Nevertheless, there has been, up to now, relatively little effort to identify what that might be. The news media have been generous in their attention to the movement, but their coverage has understandably emphasized particular confrontations and the abuses that have triggered them. Analogously, more leisured analyses have focused on the very serious and complex ethical issues raised by scientific experimentation on animals. So the questions that Susan Sperling raises at the end of the introductory chapter of *Animal Liberators*—why our society has embraced this cause at this time and how this reflects our changing ideas about animals and nature—are timely and important. And the method by which she proposes to provide the answers is intriguing. She defines the animal liberation movement (specifically the vigorous and effective wing based in the Berkeley–San Francisco area) as an independent subculture, interpretable through the lenses of cultural anthropology. She gives the movement a historical as well as a social context, accurately noting that resistance to the use of animals in laboratories has deep nineteenth-century roots. Thus in her introduction, Sperling outlines an ambitious and exciting project. Unfortunately, the execution of this project proves consistently disappointing. In *Animal Liberation*, Sperling has wasted a great opportunity.

The first disappointment is the thinness of Sperling's description of the San Francisco bay area animal liberation movement. This should be the heart of her analysis, but it occupies only one of nine chapters, buried in the middle of the book. Her sources of information are surprisingly limited, given that, separate subculture though the movement might be, it was readily available to her scrutiny (she conducted her research while a graduate student in anthropology at the University of California, Berkeley). Most of Sperling's material comes from interviews with nine activists, supplemented by a reading of movement literature (periodicals and ephemera such as pamphlets handed out at demonstrations). This selection raises serious questions. Can such a small group provide an adequate basis for analyzing a whole movement? (Such doubts are not dispelled by Sperling's assertion that she is interested in interpretation rather than statistics.) Why did she rely solely on her informants' statements about what they were doing, rather than watching them in action? There is no suggestion that she tried to attend the meetings, rallies or demonstrations that must have occurred frequently in the bay area during the period of her research. Her only experience of such occasions seems to have come when activists protested the work of one of her professors at Berkeley.

This lack of corroborating or supplementary evidence makes the interviews particularly crucial to Sperling's analysis. But they are brief—three pages or less—and superficial, usually including a physical description of the informant and the interview setting, a few biographical tidbits and a (rather simplistic) statement of the subject's political commitment. For example, Judith Green is a "small, tense, angry-looking woman" who lives in a working-class neighborhood in Berkeley, a vegan who once refused medicine when she had a kidney infection because the prescribed drug had been developed through animal experimentation. Mariela Gordon, an M.B.A. student whom Sperling describes as "pragmatic," "has an engaging smile and long dark hair"; she advocates diplomacy rather than confrontation and hopes that increasing regulation will make animal experimentation unappealing to university bureaucracies. All this is interesting enough as far as it goes, but more would have been better. The activists Sperling interviewed should have been given room to develop their philosophical and tactical positions at sufficient length to show their sophistication and diversity. Instead of recording these fresh voices from the front, Sperling offers what are essentially book reports—summaries of the works of authoritative proponents and analysts of the animal liberation movement like Tom Regan, Andrew Rowan and Peter Singer. It is true that they have all been important contributors to the debate about the use of animals in science, and they certainly belong in the footnotes and bibliography of *Animal Liberators.* But their books and articles are readily available and Sperling has nothing new to say about them.

Similar problems arise with regard to her use of historical material. It is unclear why Sperling decided to devote more than one-third of her book to the nineteenth-century antivivisection movement. Again, she presents no fresh material, but spends a great deal of time summarizing secondary sources, such as the writings of James Turner and R.D. French, work that is widely recognized and easy to find. Further, since Sperling is considerably less familiar with Victorian Britain than with late capitalist America, even her reliance on such im-

Harriet Ritvo is the author of The Animal Estate: The English and Other Creatures in the Victorian Age *(Harvard University Press). She teaches at M.I.T.*

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peccable authorities cannot protect her from the errors of fact and interpretation that mar this part of the book. Some of these errors may seem trivial—for example, the date of Britain's landmark Cruelty to Animals Act is misstated twice as 1886, even though the correct date of 1876 appears in a nearby quotation—but the fact that she interprets this act as a triumph for the Victorian antivivisection movement rather than a crushing defeat (a consensus shared by Victorian activists on both sides and by historians) is certainly significant. She readily accepts some highly questionable clichés about the nineteenth century, such as its monopoly on sentimentality, while being insufficiently aware of others that should condition any interpretation of Victorian culture. Perhaps the most startling instance of this occurs when Sperling finds it "hard . . . to think of the Victorian world"—with its railroads, steamships and smoky factories—"in terms of being a technological society."

Exacerbating these research-derived difficulties is Sperling's complicated relationship to her subject. In a brief preface she outlines her own position on animal experimentation: She sympathizes with many of the feelings of her interview subjects, she is in favor of regulating animal experimentation but not of abolition, she strongly resists any blurring of the distinction between human beings and other animals. She explains her position, she says, simply to assuage the natural curiosity of readers, not because her book is intended as a polemic on one side or another. But there is more to it than that. Even ethnographers who study decidedly alien societies find it impossible to assume a scholarly stance of neutral or objective observation; the odds are presumably less favorable for the analyst who has not left home. On one level, Sperling explicitly acknowledges this issue, documenting her own experience of animal experimentation, comparing her own home and appearance to those of her informants, and recording her own reactions, like her guilty realization that she had walked into her interview with Judith Green adorned with pieces of dead animals.

This technique, however, is more disarming than frank. Although the argument is submerged, possibly unintentional and therefore not particularly effective, *Animal Liberators* is a polemic in defense of animal experimentation. Sperling repeatedly indicates that she has not confronted the full complexity

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of the issues. In the introductory chapter, for example, she recounts her sentimental revulsion at a research project requiring the slaughter (perhaps cruel and perhaps not) of guinea pigs that recalled a childhood pet. She cannot, however, understand why an experiment that separated infant langur monkeys from their mothers should attract the attention of activists, even though she herself connects it to Harry Harlow's "famous studies of separated rhesus macaque infants," of which the langur experiment seems an only somewhat less abusive version. Although the Harlow experiments still feature prominently in experimental psychology textbooks, they have been criticized by animal advocates for years. Sperling's ignorance of this criticism is surprising; her suggestion that protesters targeted the more recent experiment because the principal investigator was a woman trivializes their position. In the course of this discussion she also advances the indefensible canard that valid and well-designed research is less likely than bad research to involve cruelty to experimental subjects. More subtly, Sperling reveals her bias in the language she uses to describe activists and authorities. The book ends with a lone interviewee, who is given about twice as much space as any of the earlier ones, as well as the last word. Sandra Bressler is the executive director of the California Biomedical Research Association; her defense of the use of animals as experimental subjects is repeatedly described as "reasonable" and "rational."

The problem with all this is not Sperling's position: "It takes one to know one" is not a cardinal rule of either anthropology or history. Not all thoughtful and compassionate people have come to the same conclusions about the complicated issues raised by animal experimentation. But by failing to recognize her antagonistic commitment, Sperling undermines her reliability as a witness and sabotages her ability to understand what she sees. □

THE COURIER

for Jan Karski,
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to inform the world of the Holocaust

I am carrying the sea
in my cupped hands.
Not drops of it, not liters,
the whole dark sloshing sea.
Crabs pinch. Nettles sting.
Sharks rip at my palm lines.
It hurts to hold this much,
to be so small and human,
running, running
as the bloody sun runs—
west—carrying the sea
in my cupped hands.
The faster my legs move,
the more I try to get there,
the more fear I spill.
Rancid fish and wrackweed,
broken shell and coral,
mark my travel like a tideline.
Everywhere I've been
I have sown salt.
Everywhere now, the rich
green earth laid waste.
But I do not look behind,
not behind and not above,
where the white moon
nightly is devouring
the stars, first in nibbles,
then vast mouthfuls,
bloating like a leech,
whipping storms
as cruel as history
inside my pressed hands,
these poor dumb beasts,
my hands. How much they want
to toss it all away,
to empty it in trenches,
to wall it up for good.
How much I want to fold
myself in pine boughs,
to lie on high ground
humming, to be free
of this thing I've been
anointed with, so
horribly, to make it all
mad fancy, mere nightmare.
It is not. Straight ahead,
face forward, I must run,
run, as the bloody sun runs—
west—and bring the sea for
the whole wide world to hold.
The journey is a minute.
A millennium. Both.
But I do get there. I do.
I am ushered to a chamber
of telephones and chairs,
an ordinary room
of the twentieth century.
Three well-dressed men
walk in, mopping brows
with well-starched hand-
kerchieves. I want to beg
forgiveness, to explain
I'm just the courier,
a small man, insignificant,
that the news is not
the messenger. But my words
are lost in wind. The three
stand stiffly, staring.
They smile. They nod.
And I . . . I let it go,
waves of salt and bone
flooding from my hands,
drowning all the ordinary
rooms of this century.
And the next. From the sea
floor I start rising through
a maelstrom black as ink,
past the dead eyes of the living,
the live eyes of the dead . . .
till I surface with my hands,
two smooth and separate shells
knifed open like an oyster
which can never join again.

Paul Genega

MUSIC.

GENE SANTORO

African Music

More of Africa's musical abundance is now available here than ever before. Even the small sample of recent recordings reviewed below demonstrates the recombinant variety of the continent's sounds.

Mzikayifani Buthelezi's *Fashion Maswedi* (Rounder) introduces a traditionalist Zulu star to the United States. Buthelezi's songs tell tales, pass on memories and, like so much African folk music, mingle the material of the tribal past with European elements: in this case the fiddle that drones at the edge of tonality; the gigue-ish beats; the wheezing concertina introduced by European sailors. Buthelezi's somewhat raw vocals dart and careen around the backdrop provided by the voices of his four wives and the men in his band. It's hypnotic stuff—listening to it can be a little like watching transdimensional doors open.

Philip Tubane is sui generis. First there's his physical and technical mastery: How many musicians can pick guitar with fingers and toes while tootling as many as five pennywhistles and still manage to limn the melody vocally? On the cover of *Malombo* (Kaya), he's pictured guitar in hand, eyes popping, possibly because he's just executed one of

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his outrageous segues from some traditional South African song to a lick from a sea chantey or an American blues tune, making a remarkably smooth transition from a sunny major-key vamp to a minor-key, jazz-flavored bridge. But the photograph also captures the deliberately ragged style that is part of his appeal: He groans and grunts along with his guitar lines while his equally remarkable and unpredictable percussionists suddenly downshift rhythms even as you're grinning and dancing.

The spicy mix behind *Thokozile* (Virgin/Earthworks) reaches past African audiences to grab almost any rock listener. The lead, Mahlathini, has a voice somewhere between bluesman Charley Patton's growl and Clarence "Frogman" Henry's croak; the female backing trio, the Mahotella Queens, plays heavenly call-and-response with him; a breathy pennywhistle arcs a solo to a near-squeal; a chiming guitar glints off-beats; the bass rumbles and leaps; and the whole thing is undergirded with the thudding *mbaqanga* beats that are somehow both vicious and laid-back.

The Boyoyo Boys, of course, are the reason Paul Simon first went to South Africa—it was a tape of them that planted the seeds for *Graceland*. In their native land the Boyoyo Boys have been superstars since the 1970s, boasting seventeen gold records. They work with catchy, exuberant grooves, weaving their apparently minimalist lines into a dance floor texture almost like a South African version of Booker T. and the M.G.s. Their latest U.S. release, *TJ Today* (Rounder), kicks and stutters in a way that's never feverish but also never lets up.

About five years ago, the international musical focus was on Nigeria, where King Sunny Ade and Fela Kuti had created fascinating if quite different pop hybrids. The hype surrounding them didn't take, but the attention did prepare the way for the surge of interest in South African music that followed *Graceland*'s release. Lately there's been a lot of attention lavished on musicians from Mali, where local tribal sounds mix with Caribbean beats and centuries of Moslem musical practice. Heart-stopping singers like Youssou N'Dour and Salif Keita have appeared in the United States, filling New York's Beacon Theater with an audience of Americans and Africans willing to brave the security guards in order to dance on their seats or in the aisles.

Zani Diabate & the Super Djata Band (Mango) introduces one of the hottest, most propulsive bands in Mali to the United States. Zani's guitar shuffles the blues of Freddie King, the textures of Jimi Hendrix and traditional *kora* floating lines; his raspy vocals soar and fracture syllables with the Islamic precision he, like many Malian singers, can flaunt. His powerhouse band hammers and warps a sinewy variety of dance rhythms. I hope that if they ever make it here they play a seatless hall. □

ART.

ARTHUR C. DANTO

Degas

At no point in his long career was Degas less than a very great artist, appreciated as such by his luminous peers: Pissarro wrote that Degas was "without a doubt the greatest artist of the period," and Renoir esteemed him above Rodin as a sculptor. But his masterpiece, the astonishing portrait of the Bellelli family, was achieved at the beginning, when he was only 24. It is not that what came afterward was less great but only that Degas gave up on the concept of the masterpiece, just as he surrendered the ambition to paint historical tableaux, once he became, with Manet and the Impressionists with whom he was so uneasily associated, a painter of modern life. That family portrait, in terms of its scale and narrative ambition, was clearly intended to make his name in the system of Salon exhibition through which reputation and commissions were still won in 1858, when he began to work on it. But whether in fact it was ever exhibited remains a controverted issue among specialists, and it evidently disappeared from sight until after Degas's death. Its discovery would have been like finding the manuscript of *War and Peace* in Tolstoy's desk, unpublished because the author had been convinced by his own arguments in *What Is Art?* that there was something unworthy in the novel form as such. Degas's contempt for the institution of the Salon and presumably the genre of painting it generated was moralistic and aesthetic at once. In any case he never did anything quite like this portrait again, but part of what makes it

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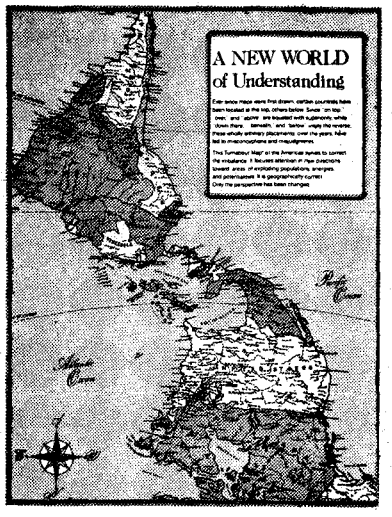

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one of the great paintings of the world also explains the greatness and mystery of his powerful artistic language. How great the remaining work is may be judged from the following consideration. *The Bellelli Family* dominates the first main gallery of the magnificent exhibition devoted to Degas at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (until January 8), on a note of artistic intensity so acute that it seems at first as if the show opens with its own climax. But in truth the excitement never diminishes: The show is all climax.

The Bellelli Family is the sort of painting Henry James might have done had he been a painter rather than a writer, but retained his novelistic powers and profound feeling for civilized desperation and emotional bondage. It is an essay on matrimonial tension and domestic politics, transacted in an elegant but cramped *salotto* in which mother, father, two children and the family dog reveal the forces that tear them apart and keep them together in mutual trapped agony. The mother—Degas's Aunt Laura, who had married to evident regret Count Gennaro Bellelli—stands in erect suffering and wifely disdain at the extreme left of the canvas, forming with her two daughters an allegorical group that displays itself, aggressively, as a monument to maternal virtue. The girls are wearing spotless white pinafores, starched, ruffled, unwrinkled, emblems of the mother's ability to run a difficult domestic establishment against any odds, attributes of housewifely rectitude. Pregnant and dressed in mourning—two conditions that connect her to the bassinet behind her and the drawing, by Degas himself, of her father, on the wall beside her proud head—Laura stares over her husband. Her severe face projects a long list of injuries and indignities that we know he is not allowed to forget. The little girls feign an innocence that announces their complicity in their mother's posture of aggrieved femininity. Count Bellelli is shown from behind. He is penned, as it were, between his armchair and the hearth. He turns to glare balefully at the martyrizing martyrs, as if through bars no less imprisoning for being invisible. Windows, doubtless signifying escape and freedom, are reflected in the mirror above the mantelpiece. The family dog, exhibiting the deep pragmatic wisdom of its kind as well as what must be long experience, is sneaking out of the picture before all hell breaks loose. Our sympathies are with the dog: The members of the Bellelli household form the kind of *enfer* Sartre later defined as "other people."

Degas's use of edges, here and elsewhere, is dictated by psychological necessity. They form, in *The Bellelli Family*, the boundaries of a familial cage. They frame a feeling and intensify its expression. So they are not the mere physical boundaries of the canvas but part of its moral content. The principles of composition, accordingly, are not geometrical but emotive, and the asymmetries the artist so ingeniously exploits embody the balances and imbalances of human relationships. In *The Duchessa di Montejasi With Her Daughters Elena and Camilla*, the Duchess occupies four-fifths of the interior space of the canvas, as if she were a selfish and self-aggrandizing personage. The two daughters are crowded into space at the left too small for them, but they are redeemingly cropped by the edge, implying that they were already half outside the picture anyway. The mother looks fierce and sour, dominating but also lonely. She stares out at us in some silent appeal for recognition of her sorrows. One of her daughters gives us an uninterested glance, not caring a damn what we think. The other is peering outside the picture with some animation. They are seated almost as in a carriage, being borne away from the salon's oppressiveness.

Such devices are used over and over. In the mystifying *Interior* (also called *The Rape*), an elegantly dressed man leans against the right edge of the painting with its implicit door. He casts a smudged shadow on the wall, and is in a posture of strained patience. At the far left a woman in a chemise kneels on the floor. There is between them about as much space as the painting will allow, and yet they are tethered together in some way we are obliged to read as sexual. There is a corset on the floor. But the narrow bed is made, so no act has taken place yet, and the gentleman shows no sign of getting undressed. Perhaps he is reflecting on what he may have let himself in for. So may the girl be: We feel she is weeping, or has wept. The emptiness separating them is eloquent and ambiguous, and with the other works so far considered, one feels one knows why Degas never married. For a less charged example, consider the wonderful portrait of Hortense Valpincon as a child. She is, like the Bellelli girls, wearing white, but she has a saucy straw hat and a look of mischief. Degas has placed her to the far right of the canvas, at the

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edge of a table, which she leans against. Behind her, outside the canvas, is the implicit outdoors for which she is shawled. One feels she will turn and bolt at any moment out of the picture and Degas has left the marks of a sketch on her back, as if, in a kind of joke, he is saying that he had better capture her while he can. What child except one with the sharp fingers of Laura Bellelli on her shoulder will hold still long enough to have her portrait done?

In the orthodox hierarchy of the French Academy, historical painting occupied the topmost rung, and the training of the aspiring academician promised such skills as would be demanded for displaying historical personages at crucial narrative moments. Anatomy and physiognomy were to be mastered for this purpose, and the tableaux themselves were exhibited for the moral edification of the public. Degas must have been the last major artist still to feel the power of these imperatives when the forces that were driving his contemporaries toward modernism put such ideals hopelessly out-of-date. In later years, Manet recalled that Degas was still "engaged with Semiramis" when the two first met in the Louvre. The Met's exhibition contains all the historical paintings by Degas, including *Semiramis Building Babylon*, but when this master turned away from the fabrications that strike us as artificial even in his hands, and undertook to become a painter of modern life—the phrase is Baudelaire's but is given a wider reference in the writing of T.J. Clark—it was as if he simply bent the strategies of historical narration to depict the lives of the denizens of the Faubourg Saint-Germain. He became, so to speak, the historical painter of everyday life, showing that modern women were as capable of suffering as Dido or Medea, and that betrayal, exploitation, vexation and anguish remained the common lot. Even the famous and loved painting known as *Woman With Chrysanthemums* moves one to ask why the pensive woman is squeezed into so narrow a space, letting the flowers dominate the bulk of the picture. Is she oppressed by this emblem of domestic prowess or vindicated, or is she communicating a message some *he* will fail to understand?

Yet at a certain moment in the career, questions of psychology seem to recede, leaving behind only the cunning of placement, cropping, angle of vision and framing, as Degas becomes first an observer

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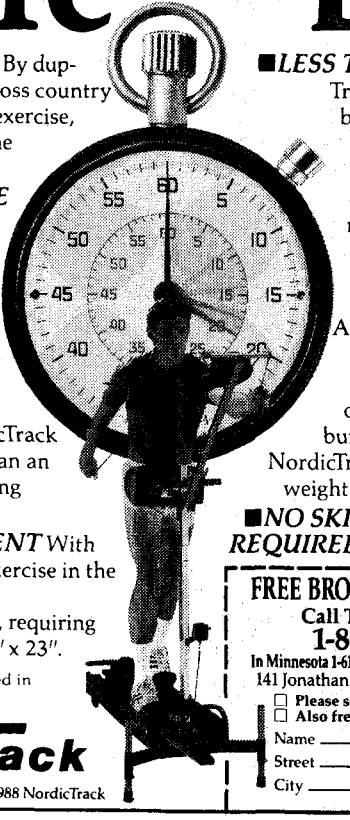

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of the public life of Paris—the ballet, the theater, the race course, the cafe concert, the picture gallery, the boutique and the brothel—and then returns to the intimacy of interior spaces in a profound sequence of women. They are shown bathing, climbing in and out of tubs (an English word that was appropriated by the French), brushing their hair or having it brushed, engaged in private gestures of personal care in a feminine world from which males have all but disappeared, so that Degas has them all to himself, and the only relationship that endures, aside from that between their maids and themselves, is that between artist and model. But the slow transition from the personal to the public to the private reveals Degas divesting himself of another identity besides that of historical painter: He had as well to discard the painting program of the old masters, which he handled with such absolute brilliance.

I refer to the method of using a ground tone and then working forward to the brightest lights and backward to the darkest darks, modeling the figure in and out of shadows. One can see this to marvelous effect in some of the studies for *The Bellelli Family*, especially in a drawing of one of the daughters, Giulia, on buff paper, with her pinafore picked out in wet strokes of bluish white, brilliant against the brown, and her body swiftly sketched in sepia. Only the head is finished, but it is thrust forward by a bold brushful of blue behind it. The method of chiaroscuro gives the study an exceptional visual excitement, heightened by being only partly finished. Degas used colored papers throughout his career to attain such urgency: There is a head of Laura Bellelli on green paper, and a crayon and gouache study of her daughter Giovanna on blue paper. This manner of working set him at an opposite pole from the Impressionists, who explicitly repudiated painting in terms of modeling light against dark in favor of juxtaposing pure hues, building forms through touches of saturated color. Indeed, Degas refused the label "Impressionist" with its implied reference to subjectivity and sensation, and insisted on being known as a "realist."

He believed, as a matter of artistic politics, in the independence of the Impressionist exhibitions, that enabled artists to leave works dramatically underfinished and subjects understated. But he tried to change the name of these to "Impressionist and Realist" exhibitions and to have a number of artists included who could hardly have been thought Impressionists by any criterion. As in many other things, he was a difficult man, but part of his originality as an artist comes from his applying the drama of chiaroscuro to the depiction of ordinary life, and then by situating his subjects spatially in ways he had evolved for psychological intensifications that now no longer greatly mattered to him. A good place to see all this at work is in *The Millinery Shop* of 1882, on loan from the Art Institute of Chicago. A woman examining a hat is viewed from above, seated at the corner of a counter, at the far right of the painting. All this might have been meant to show her under a psychological description, but she really seems merely to be examining a bonnet, cropped to no obvious purpose. As with *Woman With Chrysanthemums*, the largest space is given over simply to a display, of hats in this instance, one of which has a delicious green ribbon. The hats themselves are miraculous smudges of paint, lent a further vivacity by being set against the brown tone so characteristic of Degas. The brown, one cannot but feel, gives a certain melancholy to the space, heightened only by the frivolity of the flouncy headgear. (Perhaps it is more psychological than one would have thought, after all.)

The woman—whether customer or shopgirl trying out the wares—is, one might say, just a woman, with no particular expression and no specific physiognomy. In the great paintings in pastels of bathing women, which mark the prolonged final phase of Degas's career as he slipped into near blindness, the subjects are characteristically shown from behind, as if their faces and features were not relevant. What we see are their bodies and themselves engaged with their bodies. There is nothing prurient, nothing even especially erotic in these nudes, and indeed their flesh folds and bulges in abstract shapes or they are shown with rudely simplified torsos, smudges on smudges, the stroked flesh no different from the stroked walls and furniture. Degas is moving, one feels, toward a kind of pure painting, the novelistic impulses left behind, the deft chiaroscuro renounced, and only the old artist, the female body and stumps of colored chalk left to engage in endless interactions. And how strange the forms now become! In *Nude Woman Drying Herself* (the titles are now merely descriptive), the towel looks like a pair of

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white arms enfolding her slack torso. In some later bathing pictures, shoulders and breasts seem like twinned forms.

Some authors, associating bed, body and bath, suggest these are prostitutes. I find this hard to believe. These works seem without reference, beyond the simple referents of bed, bath and body. Degas addresses the figures with such intensity that they become distorted, or dissolve into their spaces, or acquire extra limbs, or metamorphose into something marginally human. It was as though the female body were being reinvented—erased, enlarged, rejoined, diminished, recomposed, perhaps by some dim Cubistic impulses. Sometimes, as with *Woman With Towel*, they rise out of the cloth in a metaphor of birth or rebirth. Or, read another way, the two ends of the held towel seem to form figures who engage with the woman in a ghostly *pas de trois*. And the colors are amazing: lavenders, cadmium yellows, oranges, absinthes, flame blues, as if the artist were now giving himself every freedom of form and hue. The work is at the farthest possible extreme from the historical painting that defined his first undertakings. If this is where he found himself heading, small wonder he could barely tolerate the existence of his masterpiece. □

THEATER.

THOMAS M. DISCH

The Cocktail Hour
Tea With Mommy and Jack
Spoils of War
Eastern Standard
The Sea Plays

If His Drunkenness the god Dionysus continues to take an interest in the art particularly devoted to him, he must be well pleased with the beginning of this theater season. All four of the new plays that I've seen honor the god of the vine in no uncertain terms. Virtually every major character in each play spends at least one act boozing steadily until the dramatic dew point of drunken truth is reached, which is followed in most cases by an obligatory bittersweet hangover, then the curtain, and then, if life is any mirror of art, drinks at a nearby bar. I'm sure so clear a trend must be significant, but I'm less sure of what. The four plays are comedies in which satire and sentiment are served up in varying proportions. In three of them alcoholic parents get pickled with their children in a manner so evocative of the American theater's archetypal family booze-up, *Long Day's Journey Into Night*, that one can almost smell O'Neill's whisky-soured breath wafting from the stage.

Are English-speaking peoples such inveterate sots that all their important emotional transactions must be conducted under the influence? Or is it rather (as I'd like to think) that playwrights cannot resist the dramatic convenience of the Gospel according to Dionysus: *In vino veritas*? There is a darker possibility: that we are entering an age so grim, and so lacking other forms of alleviation, that our fairest hope is, as Keats has it, that we "might drink, and leave the world unseen, and . . . fade away." If so, Dionysus has rewarded his devotees with the gift they've been seeking, the sweet oblivion of limits accepted and conflicts tactfully, tacitly avoided, the fatalist calm of those content to sit "by a cyder-press, with patient look" and "watch the last oozing hours by hours." Perhaps the epithet for the 1990s will be "numb."

But see how generalizations can mislead. Play by play, the four plays were sprightly enough, and none more so than *The Cocktail Hour* at the Promenade Theatre on Broadway and 76th Street, a comedy of great suavity and polish that asks the question that playwrights aspiring to write such comedies must often ask themselves: Is it possible, in a society of mostly louts and clods, to write comedies of great suavity and polish? A.R. Gurney's answer is a delicately ironic yet somehow self-assertive Yes! The play is a traditional family quadrille of parents (Nancy Marchand and Keene Curtis), and sibs (Bruce Davison and Holland Taylor). The son has written a play, *The Cocktail Hour*, about his family and has come to receive their permission to have it produced. The work he describes to them is the one we're seeing, and Gurney's resourcefulness in varying the angle of the play's self-reflectivity is equal to his balletic "modesty": For all his fancy skating, Gurney never oversteps the bounds of good taste by seeming to *try* to be clever.

The Cocktail Hour belongs to that vanishing breed of well-tailored plays whose rarity is lamented by the author's (fictive) parents, plays taking place in comfortable living rooms with characters whose deportment, speech and clothes mirror those of the audience. Gurney's characters inhabit the Platonic Connect-

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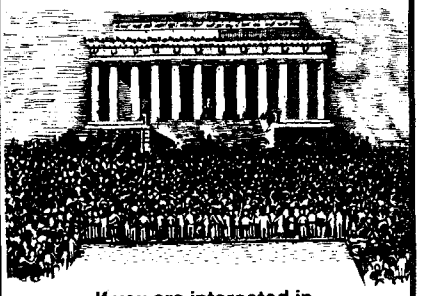

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icut that exists on the cover of *The New Yorker*, a realm half cartoon, half greeting card. (The typeface chosen for the play's poster and program is that identified with the magazine.) I note this with no disparagement: The cartoons are witty and the sentiments of the greeting card wholesome and heartwarming. Mr. Gurney, as impersonated by Bruce Davison, could not be more ingratiating, more judiciously affirming of those values that sort with the life he depicts: comfort, civility, warmth and wit. Then why (Davison-as-Gurney often wonders, as do I) isn't he rich? Why don't critics, and audiences, take him to their hearts as the British, for instance, have taken Alan Ayckbourn to theirs? If ever a play belonged on Broadway, it would seem to be *The Cocktail Hour*. (This production originated at San Diego's Old Globe Theatre.)

A tentative answer is that people have come to expect dramas of family life to be wrenching, after the manner of *Long Day's Journey Into Night*, to which Gurney's play relates as satyr-play to tragic trilogy. That seemed to be the burden of *The New York Times*'s less than wholehearted response: Gurney wasn't sufficiently earnest. Indeed, he was not. Nor did he scathe. His attitude toward his imaginary family members was what we all tend to feel in the cocktail hours of our daily lives, not love and hate in the grand manner but a mere tolerant, sadder-but-wiser affection. Can it be that Gurney's very mildness is an unwelcome home truth? That we would rather see ourselves in the masks and buskins of bigger emotions?

Nancy Marchand was particularly delectable in the range and precision of her actorly nuance, but everyone in the cast was good. Ditto the *comme il faut* set and costumes by Steven Rubin, and Jack O'Brien's gratifyingly invisible direction.

Shela Walsh's *Tea With Mommy and Jack* at the Hudson Guild Theater, located in a public housing complex on West 26th Street, is not so shapely a comedy of family life as Gurney's, but it is every bit as funny and regularly spills over into the uproarious. David Groh and Sylvia Miles play the title roles of Jack Kerouac and his madly doting mother, comic monsters cannily extrapolated from the reported life of the Great Beatnik in his declining years, off the road and under the thumb of a mother of nightmarish vulgarity. In the play mother and son entertain a female visitor, played by Caris Corfman, who finds a way to seduce both parties to Jack and Mommy's Oedipal romance. Matching their liquid consumption rate is only part of her strategy.

Walsh's take on Kerouac is charitable but damning even so. She gives him his moments of quirky charm and inspired balderdash; she even paints his romance with Mommy with the colors of a wacky chivalry, as though Kerouac were a straight Quentin Crisp, flaunting a love that dare not speak its name and insisting that it's fabulous fun. And so it is, by and large. The production, directed by Lawrence Sacharow, originated at the River Arts Repertory in Woodstock, New York.

Michael Weller's *Spoils of War* has been evolving, like an insect, by distinct stages. It began in May uptown at The Second Stage as the capstone of a season devoted to the author's work, migrated to Toronto and has now returned to New York as the first Broadway play of the season. If it has not finally achieved full butterfly apotheosis, it is at least a contender for Ten Best status—and would have been even in olden days when there were more than ten new plays opening on Broadway in any given season. The play's basic virtue is that it gives Kate Nelligan a tailor-made chance to look just wonderful. She plays an Everywoman of a certain age and class: a caring mother, a wronged and righteous ex, a loyal friend, a frowsy sexpot and a role-model alcoholic who never becomes so drunk that her tongue loses its sharp edge. Kate Nelligan *will* make you love her. And that's the plot.

Jeffrey De Munn, Christopher Collet and Kevin O'Rourke as, respectively, Nelligan's ex, son and pickup rarely get to be more than foils. De Munn portrays a 1930s radical whose revolutionary ardors have been damped by war and hunger for base material goodies. But Weller abandons his sketch of failed radicalism as soon as it's been blocked in. Like Nelligan's Elise, Weller's interest in politics seems limited to its use as a ploy in what really matters, the strategies of sexual warfare.

The son, presumably the playwright's self-portrait, is an even sketchier figure, and Christopher Collet cannot be blamed for being miscast (he looks nearer 26 than 16) and supplied so scantily with dialogue or even a raison d'être. Weller's problem as a playwright, as well as the secret of his success, is that he's never created a character he didn't like. He's

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huggy. I'm sure that if Weller had sought *his* parents' permission to have *Spoils of War* produced they'd have been tickled pink. This is a long day's journey into a tolerably nice tomorrow, making for mellow feelings but offering little in the way of food for thought.

Richard Greenberg, the 30-year-old author of *Eastern Standard*, like Weller, aspires to tell a story that can be understood as a scale model for our time and kind, but he represents a very different milieu. In an interview in *The New York Times* Greenberg speaks of growing up on Long Island in "a highly middle-class environment," and *Eastern Standard* has been characterized by both those who applaud and who denigrate it as a salute to yuppiedom. In calling himself middle-class, Greenberg employs a common evasion, for unless "upper-class" is to refer only to Rockefellers and royalty, then the society Greenberg springs from and sings of is surely upper class; lower-upper, if one wants to niggle.

Greenberg writes quick, punchy dialogue in the manner of a latter-day Philip Barry, and like a with-it hostess in the society he depicts he admits the discreeter sort of gays into his list of dramatis personae and even allows them to provide half the romantic interest. (The price to be paid, as you might guess, is that one of the lovers has AIDS.) His play has ruffled some feathers, however, because of its unsentimental, not to say cruel treatment of its two lower-class characters, a waitress (played by Barbara Garrick) and a bag lady (Anne Meara in a star turn), whom the architect hero (Dylan Baker) has misguidedly invited to his Hamptons summer home along with three of the right sort: Phoebe, the stockbroker he loves (Patricia Clarkson); her brother Peter, a TV producer (Kevin Conroy); and Drew Paley, a gay postmodern painter of the first rank (Peter Frechette, to whom the author alots the best one-liners and the biggest scenes, and who returns the favor by delivering a bravura performance). The bag lady avenges her threatened eviction by running off with everyone's valuables, and the waitress shows her true colors by trying to vamp her host when her stockbroker rival has absented herself to see a former lover. The playwright's not-quite-unstated message is that the lower orders, through no fault of their own, are not to be trusted; that it is probably safer nowadays to do without servants altogether (the bag lady has been a cook) and either do one's own cooking or eat out (Act I takes place in a posh restaurant). Greenberg's view of class relations seems an accurate reflection of the new social ethos in which liberalism has become the L-word (though the plot is not so different from that of *Ways and Means*, Noel Coward's one-act comedy of 1935. *Plus ça change*). But Greenberg expresses his illiberal views with vigor and wit, and surely that must count in his favor as a dramatist. Interested playgoers will be able to judge for themselves, since *Eastern Standard* will be moving from its sold-out run at the Manhattan Theater Club to Broadway's Golden Theater on December 19.

Four of Eugene O'Neill's journeyman one-acters were performed together as *The Sea Plays* by the Willow Cabin Theater under the direction of its founder Edward Berkeley. The production was only the second in the company's young history: The players were recruited from the director's acting classes at the Circle in the Square workshop. In effect, it was the New York equivalent of a senior class play, but there are class plays and class plays. The first time I saw *The Importance of Being Earnest* was in a 1953 production by the senior class of Fairmont (Minnesota) High School, and you can take my word, those kids were terrific. Every one of them spoke with an English accent! And funny? I split my sides.

The Sea Plays was just as good—and a much more acceptable introduction to the plays than trying to read them in O'Neill's godawful transcriptions of cockney and Swedish accents and Irish brogues (but it *is* a blessing to have his complete works at last in the three-volume edition published by The Library of America). Under Berkeley's guidance, the cast turned O'Neill's written words into a semblance of human speech, and with just a little timber nailed together to form bunk beds and a Ryderesque painting that said Here is the Sea, they did the plays more than justice, treating the young author's guileless melodramas as what he must have believed they were, proletarian tragedies. To my surprise these earliest plays form a pendant to his last works, *Iceman* and *Journey*, in that they constitute a kind of temperance tract.

The first, *Moon of the Caribees*, shows the crew of the tramp steamer Glencairn swilling rum and wenching; in *The Long Voyage Home* a sailor is shanghaied in a Cardiff bar just as he is

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about to return home to Sweden; and in *In the Zone* the reproachful letters of a lost sweetheart show us the terrible price that can be exacted by Demon Rum. The young cast had a good deal of innocent fun swaggering and sashaying around as drunk sailors and hardened prostitutes, but not so much fun that one could ever accuse them of camping. Adam Oliensis in the continuous role of Driscoll was the official star, but my personal favorites were Laurence Gleason as the shanghaied Olson (never for a moment did his Swedish accent become an embarrassment) and the two cockney trollops, Angela Nevard as Freda and Cecil Hoffmann as Mag. A cast of twenty-two (almost half of them Equity members) turning in good performances in a seldom-performed classic for the price of a first-run movie has to be accounted, with the cheeses of Chambers Street, one of an increasingly pricey city's best extant bargains. □

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to see
them leap in synchrony
who cruise a hundred miles a day
beneath the bounding main
when free.

Occasionally
from the strain
they turn
upon the rubber-suited crew
who labor so to train
them to cavort on cue
and even maim a few.

Stu-
pidity, said
Emmanuel Kant
is caused by a wicked
heart. Repent.

Maxine Kumin

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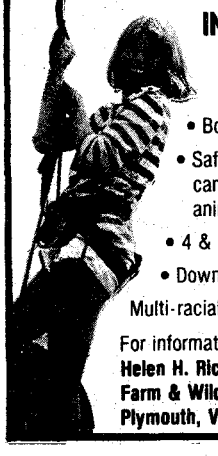

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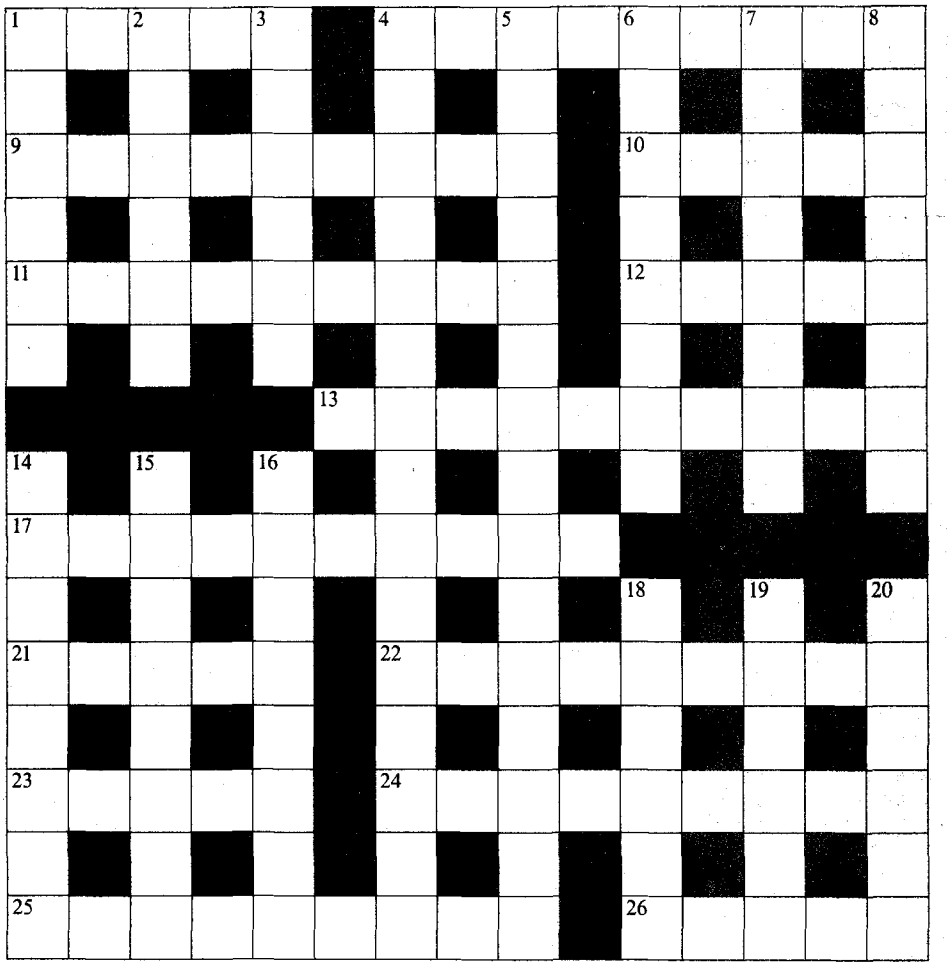

ACROSS

1 and 2 down One might if the bell doesn't ring. (One hopes for the best when one does.) (5,2,4)
4 Does it make an inelegant show, or a rather pretty one? (9)
9 Descriptive of the time when Teddy took on a Scotsman? (9)
10 It might cause a plane crash in the Himalayas. (5)
11 Minor wrinkles might be in a fair one, do Utahans find . . . (6,3)
12 . . . looking at this. (5)
13 Typified by a lot of diamonds in kids' clothes. (5,5)
17 A coaster might go, where things can be safely seen. (5,5)
21 The growing type are associated with early years, perhaps cultivated in Spain. (5)
22 Perhaps the basis of the Florentine flag, or at least a scent of it. (9)
23 Was her daughter-in-law surrounded by whisky from another country? (5)
24 The cop might be uninformed, missing one of the points. (9)
25 Such a coming out suggests a flap, but not necessarily so. (9)
26 The land that comes back to you in fairy slumber. (5)

DOWN

1 and 14 Hold in rapt attention, as one might in a hanging. (4,2,8)
2 See 1 across
3 That's what you get from a nut of a military type, one hears. (6)
4 One of the pillars of the press? (9,6)
5 Slashes a soldier receives might denote this. (It might delay dinner after church.) (6,2,7)
6 There's no beginning with all directions repeated except west—that's a lot of stuff! (8)
7 The little devil has a quite legal end! Understood? (8)
8 A broken leg is out, but one who gives a lot of praise is in. (8)
14 See 1 down
15 A maid gets upset with the pitch? Where to look for it? (That's the ticket!) (5,3)
16 The business at the tailor's might be at times—one might be doing it to buttons. (8)
18 Like little beds, they represent ties to some people. (6)
19 The type of window found in an extended, or merely vertical, projection. (6)
20 Tigers? Lions? Bears? This is where they might be playful! (6)

PUZZLED?

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WE ARE AMERICANS AND JEWS AND WE ARE PROUD TO RECOGNIZE THE NEW STATE OF PALESTINE. AT THIS HISTORIC TIME PLEASE JOIN US.

This historic statement from the JEWISH COMMITTEE ON THE MIDDLE EAST has already been endorsed by more than a thousand American Jews including Jewish Professors at over 100 Universities. Whether you are Jewish or not please join and support this vital effort.

We are Americans and Jews and we come together at this time publicly to express our strong desire to see the United States take meaningful steps to dissociate our country from the policies of Israel and to support mutual recognition between Israel and the new State of Palestine.

For some years we have witnessed Israel increasingly deviating from political policies that we find acceptable and from moral values that we hold dear. These developments are not the responsibility of any particular political party in Israel but rather stem, in our judgement, from a tragically misguided approach toward the Arab world in which Israel is located, a racialist ideology and a growing militancy. We can no longer condone or be associated with such Israeli behavior, nor, do we believe, should our country.

In recent years Israel has twisted away from basic commitments made at Camp David in 1978; annexed further territories, including East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights, while continuing to expand settlements in all the occupied territories; and grotesquely invaded Lebanon, resulting in the death of tens of thousands of Lebanese and Palestinians as well as hundreds of Israelis and Americans, and the taking as hostages of others.

Furthermore, Israeli policies and attitudes toward the Palestinian people have made it evident that only major changes in Israel's basic posture will allow for a peaceful political settlement with the Palestinians.

Israeli complicity in Irangate and Contragate coupled with Israel's employment of American Jews as spies against our country further underscore the growing dangers inherent in the current U.S.-Israeli relationship. The close identification in the public mind between Israel and Jews – an equation vigorously fostered by both the Zionist movement and the American Jewish lobby, which has come under its control – threatens to stigmatize Jews everywhere.

The recent acts of killings, beatings, curfews, expulsions and house arrests– all against unarmed Palestinians living in areas Israel has occupied for 20 years – further demonstrate that Israel has become a badly divided country with many unfortunate similarities to the situation that prevails in South Africa.

Our ancestors came to the United States because, as a result of their Jewishness, they were discriminated against and abused. The European experience culminated in the horrors of the Nazi Holocaust. How tragic that in our own time the very State established by Jews in the aftermath of this evil has become a place where racialism, religious discrimination, militarism and injustice prevail; and that Israel itself has become a pariah state within the world community. Events taking place today are all too reminiscent of the pogroms from which our own forefathers fled two and three generations ago – but this time those in authority are Jews and the victims are Moslem and Christian Palestinians.

We believe that Israel's course could not be maintained but for the continuing financial, political, military and covert support of the U.S. government. And we fear that unless firm steps of disengagement from Israel are taken now our country might get dragged into a major war for which preparations are under way.

In addition, we believe that unless the United States takes serious steps to distance itself from Israel the Israelis will mistakenly continue to think that the course they are on is acceptable to the American people.

For all these reasons we believe the time has come to ***normalize*** the U.S. relationship with Israel. A complete re-evaluation of what has become since 1967 the American sponsorship of Israel is required. The unprecedented amounts of economic aid should be cut back over the next two to three years to much smaller levels. Furthermore, the considerable military and intelligence assistance should also be radically reduced.

Unfortunately, in recent years much the opposite course has been followed, and Israel has practically become a ward of the United States. We urge an urgent and open debate about the serious problems and dangers which have resulted from the current structure of U.S.-Israeli relations. Few foreign policy issues are of such importance to our country. Consequently, we urge everyone, including our elected public officials, to resist the widespread inhibitions from speaking up about Israel, inhibitions which result from the severe financial, political and ideological pressures often brought to bear against those who do.

We further believe that the time is overdue for negotiations between the Israeli government and the PLO, which is quite clearly the chosen representative for the great majority of Palestinians – negotiations that should quickly lead to full recognition of the Palestinian State in today's occupied territories and reasonable security guarantees for all parties. In the security guarantees we think our country should participate; but no longer in the financing and supporting of the kinds of policies Israel has been pursuing. The continual oppression and denial of Palestinians of their right to self-determination is an injustice which has become intolerable not only to those demonstrating for their freedom in Jerusalem, the West Bank, Gaza and throughout Israel itself.

The citizens of Israel, of course, will ultimately choose their own country's destiny. But at the very least the citizens of the United States should stop financing and supporting policies that are contrary to the principles and values we hold precious as Americans and Jews.

"When, in the course of human events it becomes necessary for one people..."
WHAT IS THIS NONSENSE?!
PALESTINE RECOGNIZING
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The Christian Science Monitor

For updated information or requests call (202) 362-5266 at any time

Please help! Your support and contribution, whether you are Jewish or not, are vitally needed to republish this historic Statement of principles and take further steps to have a growing impact on these important issues.

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